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An Exploration of the Cultural issues in EFL Teaching Materials

The Case of 2nd Year Textbook at Algerian Secondary Schools

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Dedication

First of all, I dedicate this work To my charming queen the symbol of love, happiness, and patience "MY MOTHER".

To my everlasting support and my inspiring example "MY FATHER" the source of kindness.

To my adorable brothers Bilal, khaled, Mosaab and Faycal

To all my family members especially my aunts Nassima, Souraya and Fayza.

To the one who has a special place in my heart my uncle Lakhdar

To all my friends with whom I shared the university life, Asma notably

To all my teachers.

To all those who love me.

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A debt of heartfelt appreciation needs to be settled and paid in full in favor of my heroes in the shadows

Abstract

Language and culture are two inseparable entities. One's mastery of the linguistic elements alone does not guarantee he will be able to communicate through a language. Therefore, the need for teaching the target culture for successful language learning is vital. Accordingly, the present research is an attempt to examine the way culture is introduced in teaching English in the Algerian secondary schools. Throughout the study, this issue is examined with reference to the relevant theoretical background, the second year secondary school textbook "Getting Through". The investigation is based on a qualitative study of the textbook's cultural content using an evaluative checklist, an inspectors' interview, and a classroom observation.The main findings obtained from this investigation demonstrate that the cultural component is not presented in adequate and profound way and is limited to serve linguistic objectives. Furthermore, the gathered data revealed the absence of materials used to present the target language culture .On the basis of the collected data; our research hypotheses have been confirmed.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Acknowledgements….....I

Dedication..... II

Abstract..... III

Table of Contents..... IV

List of Abbreviations..... VIII

List of Tables.....IX

List of Figures..... X

General Introduction.....1

Chapter One: Teaching Culture in EFL Classrooms.....6

1.1. Introduction…….....7

1.2. Culture Defined…….....7

1.3. The Interconnectedness between Language and Culture.....8

1.4. Culture in the Major Language Teaching Approaches.....10

1.4.1. Culture in Traditional Methods…….....10

1.4.2. The Shift from Linguistic Competence to Communicative Competence….12

1.4.3. The shift from Communicative Competence to Intercultural Competence...14

1.5. The Reasons of Including Culture.....16

1.6. Instructional Techniques for Teaching Culture…….....17

1.6.1. Authentic Materials…….....18

1.6.2. Culture Capsule and Culture Cluster.....18

1.6.3. Mini-Drama and Role Play.....19

1.6.4. Literature.....19

1.6.5. Students as Experts…….....20

1.6.6. Literature…….....20

1.7. Conclusion.....20

CHAPTER TWO: Evaluating the Cultural Content of Foreign Language Textbooks.....21

2.1. Introduction……22

2.2. The Textbook……22

2.2.1 Definition of the Textbook……22

2.2.2. The Role of Textbooks in EFL Classrooms…….....23

2.2.3. Justification of Textbook Evaluation…….....25

2.3. Checklists for Evaluating the Cultural Content of Textbooks…….....26

2.3.1. Skierso's checklist……26

2.3.2. Byram's Model…….....27

2.3.3. Sercu's checklist…….....29

2.3.4. Other available checklists…….....30

2.3.5. A Tentative Checklist for Textbook Evaluation…….....32

2.4. Conclusion…….....36

CHAPTER THREE: Evaluation of the Cultural Content of 'Getting Through'..... 37

3.1. Introduction.....38

3.2. General Presentation of the Textbook.....38

3.3. Content.....38

3.3.1. General Analysis of the Textbook Content.....38

3.3.2. Micro-Social Analysis.....44

3.3.3. Macro-Social Analysis.....45

3.3.4. In-depth cultural Analysis.....46

3.3.5. Analysis of the Stand Point of the Author.....48

3.4. Techniques of Presentation of Content.....49

3.5. Conclusion.....51

CHAPTER FOUR: Field Work..... 52

4.1. Introduction.....53

4.2. Research Methodology and Means of Research..... 53

4.3. Inspectors' Interview.....54

4.3.1. Aims of the Interview.....55

4.3.2. Interview Procedure.....55

4.3.3. Description of the Interview.....56

4.4. Analysis of the Inspectors' Interview.....56

4.4.1. Results of the Interview.....57

4.4.2. Interpretation of the Results.....60

4.5. Classroom Observation.....61

4.5.1. Aims of the classroom observation.....61

4.5.2. Procedure of Classroom Observation.....62

4.6. Classroom observation's result and discussion..... 62

4.6.1. Overcrowded and Noisy Classrooms..... 62

4.6.2. Respect of CBA procedure with reference to culture teaching…..63

4.6.3. Lack of Cultural Syllabus…….....64

4.7. Interpretation of the Findings…….....64

4.8. Conclusion.....65

4.9. Pedagogical Implications and Recommendations……....65

4.9.1. Implications for Textbook Designers.....66

4.9.2. Implications for Secondary School Teachers.....67

General Conclusion…….....69

Bibliography.....….....71

Appendices…….....75

Appendix 'A': Forward of "Getting Through"

Appendix 'B': Textbook Evaluation Checklist's Result

Appendix 'C': Inspectors' Interview

Appendix 'D': inspector's interview answers

Appendix 'E': culturally related tasks

List of Abbreviations

CA: Communicative Approach

CBA: Competency Based Approach

CLT: Communicative Language Teaching

DM: Direct Method

EFL: English Foreign Language

FL: Foreign Language

FL: Foreign Language

FLT: Foreign Language Teaching

GTM: Grammar Translation Method

ICC: Intercultural Communicative Competence

TL: Target Language

US: United States

WW II: World War Two

ELT: English Language Teaching

TC: Target Culture

List of Tables

Table 3.1: Files heading's in "Getting Through"..... 40

List of Figures

Figure1.1: Schematic Representation of Communicative Competence……13

Figure 1.2: Intercultural Communicative Competence……..16

Figure 2.1: Criteria for Textbook Evaluation…….27

General Introduction

General Introduction

It has mostly been forgotten that a full mastery of a language does not just mean understanding the rules and using the four skills perfectly. It also requires a full mastery of the culture of that language. The teaching of culture has aroused great interest in EFL curriculum. Most language educators and experts have spoken extensively on its role and the advantages of incorporating it in foreign language classroom. Thus, culture integration is obligatory in any foreign language curriculum," If we teach language without teaching at the same time the culture in which it operates, we are teaching meaningless symbols or symbols to which the student attaches the wrong meaning." (Politzer.1959:101).

A review of the history of EFL teaching / learning shows that it most often requires a textbook whatever the context in which it takes place .for both teachers and learners, the textbook represents the heart of any program. Hence, despite the different changes the field continuously witnesses, the textbook remains extremely popular and is there to stay as the main teaching aid.

In Algeria, English is taught as a second foreign language (French being the first) and is based EFL textbooks produced locally and subject to the approval of the Ministry of National Education. Algerian learners are in the context which does not allow them direct access the English language. Therefore, the textbook is the main teaching material that is meant to provide them with such an opportunity. Thus, textbooks are considered as the window through which students come to know the language they learn and the wider context this language is used in.

As concerns EFL teaching, Algeria launched a global reform of its educational system in July 2002. This recent educational reform grounded in the Competency Based Approach as a new teaching paradigm. This change comes as an answer to the shifting demands of consistently changing society affected by globalization. There is a strong desire on the part of authorities to

depart from the previous teaching methodologies which aimed mainly at developing the learners' communicative abilities. This desire results in adopting new textbooks designed along the principles of CBA which aimed at equipping the learners with necessary competencies required to function adequately in a wide range of real life situations.

An important dimension of the reform in EFL education relates to the cultural contextualization. It is widely accepted that foreign language teaching is closely to foreign culture teaching and that EFL textbooks are never "content-less". Textbook designers are aware that English cannot be taught in a cultural vacuum but do not always agree about the type of cultural aspect that best fit the Algerian school . Despite the fact that these designers insist on the importance of integrating culture, they provide no direction concerning the frequency of culture teaching and its testing.

In Algeria, little thought is directed to the evaluation of EFL textbooks mainly as concerns cultural issues. The change of textbooks or replacement doesn't always result from a systematic evaluation but comes most of the time through Ministry decision and as a part of reform. This situation combined to our belief that culture is an important factor in achieving foreign language teaching urges us to do this research through which we attempt to evaluate the EFL textbook "Getting Through" designed for second year Algerian learners at secondary schools.

Thus, the present work aims essentially at examining the situation of teaching the target culture at the level of Algerian secondary schools and showing its importance as a part of teaching English. Teachers' attitudes are made another target in this work attempting to unveil how teachers perceive the target language cultural aspects in the teaching /learning process.

In other terms, the general enquiry of this research is to display whether the cultural dimension is adequately incorporated in “Getting Through” textbook of English. Accordingly, the objectives of this study can be summarized as the following:

- Assessing the weight of the English language cultural component as incorporated in the Algerian textbook of English.
- Showing the importance of integrating culture within the English syllabus.
- Investigating the teacher’s understanding of culture teaching and the way they actually deal with it in their classrooms.

The aforementioned problematic leads the researcher to ask the following questions:

- To what extent are the target language cultural aspects included in the textbook “Getting Through”?
- How do teachers perceive the place of the target culture in the textbook and in foreign language teaching / learning process?

To give insights in the problems raised in this study, the following hypotheses have been elaborated. The first one focuses on the textbook, the second one pertains to the teachers:

- The target language cultural component is not adequately covered within the textbook “Getting Through” and it is, rather ,shallow and superficial with respect to its treatment of culture
- Culture is neglected by EFL teachers at the secondary level. Despite their awareness about its relevance to foreign language teaching, they exclusively focus on the linguistic components of the target culture and do not design activities to integrate it in their lessons.

The hypotheses enunciated above entail the resort to several means of

data collection. To begin with, since the study at hand is dealing with the investigation of the cultural dimension in the textbook and also teacher's perceptions of the target culture in both the textbook and in the teaching /learning process, the present work is led through qualitative standards. Cases like these require investigating the issue through combining different research instruments and explore the strength of qualitative needed data to attempt a sound solution to the problem. An investigation of the textbook cultural content using a textbook evaluation checklist, an interview prepared for inspectors of English in charge of secondary schools at the level of the Wilaya of Oum El Bouaghi, and a classroom observation conducted by the researcher in the studied setting were opted for.

In fact, through triangulation, possible relationships between the three types of data obtained will be examined. This allows the possibility of crosschecking the collected information enabling us to see the extent of its consistency.

The present research is divided into four main chapters. The first and second chapters are theoretical in issue. The first chapter, the importance of culture teaching in foreign language classroom, gives an account of various definitions of the term "culture". It also explains how culture has become an integral component in different language teaching approaches and methods. Moreover, it clarifies the close relationship between language and culture, and brings under light the instructional strategies for culture teaching. As for the second chapter, it gives an overview of the models applied in evaluating the cultural content of textbooks.

The third and fourth chapters are rather of a practical orientation. Chapter three is dedicated to investigate the cultural content of the textbook under consideration. It seeks to test hypothesis one. The analysis is based on textbook evaluation checklist elaborated by the researcher adapted from **Sarah Merrouche's PhD Thesis (2006).** Field investigation is the central focus of

chapter four. It provides the context for testing hypothesis one and two. It explores inspectors' knowledge and perception of culture teaching in the textbook. It is also devoted to the investigation of classroom observation.

Chapter One

Teaching Culture in the EFL Classroom

1.1. Introduction

1.2. Culture Defined

1.3. The Interconnectedness between Language and Culture

1.4. Culture in the Major Language Teaching Approaches and Methods

1.4.1. Culture in Traditional Methods

1.4.2. The Shift from Linguistic Competence to Communicative Competence

1.4.3. The Shift from communicative Competence to Intercultural Competence

1.5. The Reasons of Including Culture in EFL Teaching

1.6. Instructional Techniques and Strategies for Teaching Culture

1.6.1. Authentic Materials

1.6.2. Culture Capsule and culture cluster

1.6.3. Mini-Drama and Role-Play

1.6.4. Literature

1.6.4. Exploring Proverbs

1.6.5. Students as Experts

1.7. Conclusion

1.1. Introduction

Over the last few decades or so, foreign language education has been experiencing a world-wide boom in the field of teaching English. This boom is essentially due to the effect of globalization and the impressive advance of technologies of communication. As a result, a lot of people, today, feel the urging need for acceptable knowledge of English language, As such, linguistic knowledge cannot stand alone to assure effective and successful communication unless it is accompanied with the cultural one

In the view of that, theoretical issues about the importance of integrating culture teaching in foreign language classrooms are stressed. In the present chapter, an attempt to clarify the concept of culture is made through highlighting some of the outstanding definitions of culture. Accordingly, the interconnection between language and culture, the history, and techniques of teaching culture are also included.

1.2. Culture Defined

The concept of culture is broad in its scope that there is no single definition for it. The restriction of the word culture in few words may distort it from its deep and vague quality. This vagueness, O'sullivan (1994:68) argues, is because the term **"culture is multi discursive, it can be mobilized in a number of different discourses."** He asserts that a single definition of culture would not make sense in every context, thus, one has to delimit the context or the field of study first and then seeks to identify the equivalent meaning of culture (ibid).

On a general level, Seelye (1984:26) describes culture as being" **a broad concept that embraces all aspects of life of man"**. The first attempt to define culture was made by anthropologists. It is believed that the English anthropologist Edward Taylor formulated the first definition of culture in which he regards it as **"…that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man**

as a member of society". (1871:1)

Other educationalists, however, do insist on some aspects and bring some more precise definition.

Larson and Smalley (1972:39) added:

> **Culture is a blueprint that guides the behavior of people in a community and is incubated in family life. It governs our behavior in groups, makes us sensitive to matters of status, and helps us know what others expect of us and what will happen if we do not live up to their expectations, Culture helps us to know how far we can go as individuals and what our responsibility is to the group.**

Tomalin (1993) makes the same distinction between two kinds of culture, the achievement culture (big "C") and the behavior culture (little "c"). While achievement culture is represented by history, geography, literature and art; behavior culture is represented by habits, dress, food and customs.

Along the same lines, culture encompasses surface culture and deep culture. While the former is a simple and overt demonstration of lifestyles, the latter, on the contrary, is more complicated because it deals with people's attitudes, beliefs, ways of thinking and emotions. Seelye (1980)

In this regard, providing a complete definition of culture would certainly not bring faithful and precise coverage to the wide ranges of dimensions it presupposes.

1.3. The Interconnectedness of Language and Culture

No one would deny the existence of a strong connection between language and culture that had been for a long time stressed by many scholars mainly when it concerns language teaching and learning. This relationship is so tight that one might see that language carries culture, and culture carries language. In other

words, language itself is defined by a culture. Brown claims that, **"A language is part of a culture and a culture is part of a language; the two are intricately interwoven so that one cannot separate the two without losing the significance of either language or culture"** (1994: 164).

In addition to this, it is the language that gives insights into its people thoughts and beliefs. In this context, Rivers (1986:135) maintains that **"language is the key to the cultural heritage of another people".** It is, therefore, this social nature of language that militates against its extraction from its cultural points of reference.

Furthermore, learning a foreign language needs to encompass aspects of culture carried out of this language and should, then, give learners into thoughts ,customs, and way of life of its native speakers. Kramsch (1993:8) supports this idea by stating that **"If language is seen as a social practice, then culture becomes the very core of language teaching. Cultural awareness must then be viewed as enabling language proficiency"**.

In considering the inseparability of the two entities, three ways how language and culture are bound together have been identified. First, language is a means to express a cultural reality, that is, with words people do not express ideas and opinions only but also reflect their attitudes. Second, language carries or embodies cultural reality, which means that through language people give meanings to their own actions and experiences. Finally, language symbolizes cultural reality, which explains why people are very often proud of their language, which they view as a symbol of their social identity.(Kramsch1998)

Another important connection between language and culture was found by the psychologist Osgood (1957) who maintains that the full meaning of a word for a person is related to an experience he had with that word in the cultural milieu, as a result, it is difficult to establish exact equivalence between words in two different languages, thus, two distinct cultures.

Several metaphors have been used for describing the interconnectedness of language and culture. Some say that language is the mirror of the culture, meaning that one can see a culture through its language. Others claim that it is appropriate to use the "iceberg" model to symbolize the relationship between language and culture. In this sense the visible (top) part of the iceberg is the language of a particular nation; the greater part, deep down the surface, is the invisible part of culture.

Another metaphor which is from a pragmatic point of view says that language is a vehicle and culture is traffic light. The relationship between the two is transportation in which Language makes communication easier and faster; culture regulates, sometimes promotes and sometimes hinders communication depending on our understanding. (Jiang 2000)

After saying all the above, the link between language and culture is clear; without culture, communicating effectively will be a hard task to do. Learning a language without its culture, as Bennett describes it, is the way to become a fluent fool. By fluent fool we mean **"someone who speaks a foreign language well, but does not understand the social or philosophical content of that language"** (Bennett, 1993:9).

Before going into any details about the teaching of culture in EFL classrooms we will first discuss the history of teaching culture along with the teaching of language.

1.4. Culture in the Major Language Teaching Approaches and Methods

Although the presence of culture in EFL classrooms is relatively recent, a review of literature shows that cultural elements have practically been always present in foreign language teaching. It was during the sixties when culture teaching started to attract the attention of scholars of FLT.

1.4.1. Culture in Traditional Methods

Initially the grammar-translation method (GTM) is one of the most traditional methods dating back to the late nineteenth and the early twentieth

century. The major characteristics of GTM, as its name suggests , is the focus on learning grammar rules and their application in the translation of the passages from the mother language to the target language. The main rational behind the teaching of a foreign language according to this method is to gain access to the 'great works' (Kramsch, 1996: 4). During these days, learners were introduced to the target culture through history, literature, and fine arts; i.e., big C culture. Small c culture was not highlighted in this method since the main focus was put on the grammatical aspect of the language which was one of the main drawbacks of the Grammar Translation Method as stated by Rivers (1981). One can say that even though small c culture was not present in any way in this m method, some forms of big C culture were clearly part of it.GTM had been a dominant method of FL teaching until the early decades of the 20th century ,during which it was replaced by the Direct Method.

Due to the advances in science and technology and with the inventions of means of transportations such as steamboats and trains, Long Fu (2001) people now had to deal with real life situations because they wanted to travel to other countries to do business there. Therefore, their attitudes towards learning/teaching foreign language changed, this led to the advent of the Direct Method. Advocated by such educators as Berlitz, this method received its name from the fact that meaning is to be directly conveyed in the TL through the use of demonstrations and visual aids with no reference to the student's native language .One of the main characteristics of this method is that the use of culturally oriented pictures makes students aware of some of everyday situations that might encounter in foreign culture.

Many scholars maintained that DM preoccupations with culture are associated with small c culture at the beginning stage and big C culture at the advanced stage. However, as Long Fu (2001:91) stated, **"the lack of a well defined sociolinguistic and socio-cultural theoretical basis made the teaching of cultural content incidental and subordinate to the teaching of language**

in this method".

The US involvement in World War Two (WWII) brought a significant change in the teaching of foreign languages. It quickly became apparent that the DM failed in making people ready for speaking the foreign language (FL) they studied. The audio-lingual method aims at teaching students how to communicate using the TL automatically, and this can be done when students form new habits in the TL and overcome the old habits of their native one.

In this teaching method, culture consists of the everyday behavior and lifestyle of the TL speakers, or the so called small "c" or behavior culture. It was believed that the audio-lingual method contributed directly to the student's ability to **"function linguistically and socially in the contemporary culture"** (Chastain, 1988:303). It is now evident that culture learning/teaching has gained much attention with the development of the audio-lingual method.

1.4.2. The Shift from Linguistic Competence to Communicative Competence

By the 1970‟s and 1980‟s the communicative approach (CA) or the communicative language teaching (CLT) started taking its first steps as a dominant approach .The CA came into being as a reaction to the focus on the use of language as a system rather than using that system in context. CLT aims at teaching the FL to enable its learners to use it for communication. As a result, FL courses have broadened their scope from focusing on improving the four skills to cover helping learners acquire cultural skills in parallel. This has led some scholars to consider culture as 'a fifth skill' (Risager, 2007). As a reaction to the linguistic competence notion introduced by Chomsky in 1965, Hymes (1972) came up with what is known as 'communicative competence'

Hymes believes that Chomsky's concept is too narrow pointing out that Chomsky's theory does not account for socio-cultural factors or differential competence in a heterogeneous speech community. So, Hymes introduces another view of competence in which linguistic theory should be considered as

part of a more general theory which is communicative competence. It is clear that the main scope of CLT is the reliance on real and authentic materials to teach. In fact the communicative competence is composed of four elements as stated by Canale and Swain (1980)

- **Linguistic Competence:** is the ability to control the linguistic code (verbal and non-verbal). This includes vocabulary knowledge as well as knowledge of morphological, syntactic, semantic, phonetic, and orthographic rules.
- **Sociolinguistic Competence:** the ability to interpret the social meaning of linguistic items and to decide and use language appropriately in the appropriate social context for the sake of communication.
- **Discourse Competence:** refers to the knowledge of rules regarding the cohesion (grammatical links) and coherence (appropriate combination of communicative function) of various types of discourse including conversations and texts.
- **Strategic competence:** incorporates knowledge of strategies necessary to avoid breakdowns in communication.

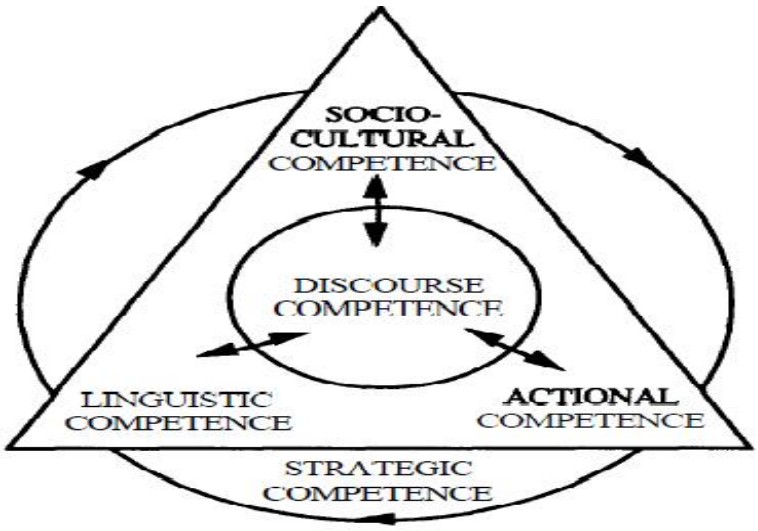


Figure 1. Schematic Representation of Communicative Competence

1.4.3. The Shift from communicative Competence to Intercultural Competence

Despite its excessive use by scholars and language educators since the 1970s, the communicative competence notion starts revealing some serious obstacles. From the point of view of Byram **"[…] it is neither appropriate nor desirable for learners to model themselves on native speakers with respect to the learning about and acquiring an understanding of another culture"** (1993:23). Neuner and Hunfeld mentioned (1993: 87) that: **"one of the deficiencies of CLT is its failure to take sufficient account of the specificity of different target audiences. In order to address this imbalance they argue the case for an intercultural approach as an extension of CLT"** Byram maintained that using the native speakers as a model is a helpful method of measuring linguistic abilities. However, he sees when it comes to compare the nature of interaction and the aspects of using language in communicative contexts, modeling would be unfitting because each language and its users have different norms and patterns to be used.

Alternatively, Byram introduces the term Intercultural Communicative Competence (ICC) in his book Teaching And Assessing Intercultural Communicative Competence (1997), which is built around five sets of skills, attitudes, and knowledge, and which he describes using the French term 'savoir' ("knowing"). These 'Savoirs' are:

- **Savoirs: (Knowledge)**

It refers to knowledge about the different social groups including their practices and interactions. Savoirs is defined as**: "A system of cultural references that structures the implicit and explicit knowledge acquired in the course of linguistic and cultural learning, and which takes into account the specific needs of the learner in his/ her interaction**

with speakers of foreign language" (Risager, 2007:114)

- **Savoir- Etre: (Attitudes and Values)**

First of all, it is the affective capacity which **"[helps] students …to be open to other cultures before they can assimilate and use cultural knowledge, while the development of culture"** (Byram, 1997:61), and a way for building up accurate attitudes towards otherness. Second, it is about the cognitive ability for putting two cultures in a comparative framework.

- **Savoir –apprendre: (the ability to learn)**

It is defined as: **"An ability to produce and operate an interpretative system with which to gain insight into the unknown cultural meanings, beliefs and practices, either in a familiar or in a new language and culture"** (Byram, 1997: 66).This means the capacity of learners to search for appropriate cultural information and how to practice it.

- **Savoir comprendre** or Knowing how to understand

This has to do with the skills that enable the intercultural speaker to interpret a document or event from another culture, to explain it and relate it to documents from their own culture, establishing relationships between aspects of the two cultures.

- **Savoir s'engager** or knowing how to commit oneself:

This fifth skill, which involves the development of critical cultural awareness, is the ability to evaluate critically national and foreign perspectives, practices and products rather than just accept them.

The following scheme summarizes the components of ICC, which learners are required to acquire:

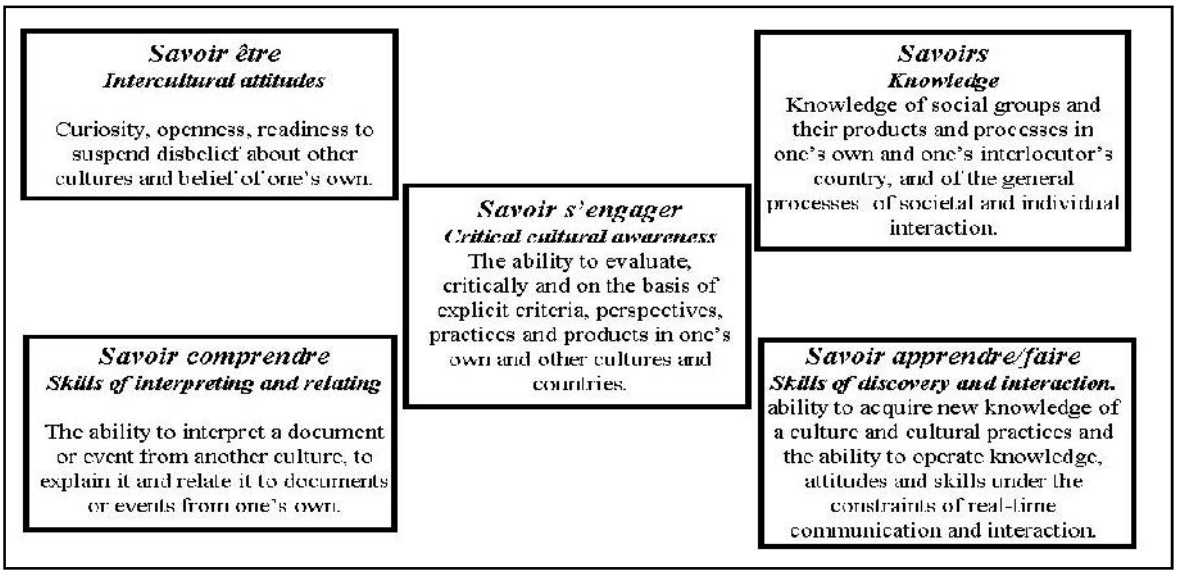


Figure1.2: Intercultural Communicative Competence (ICC) Byram, 1997:73-74)

1.5. The Reasons of Including Culture in EFL Teaching

Recently, culture integration has become a focal point of discussion in the pedagogy of foreign language education. Theorists gave several reasons for the importance of incorporating culture in EFL classrooms.

To begin with, culture and language are inseparable, Politzer, (cited in Brooks, 1960: 85-86) points out:

> **As language teachers we must be interested in the study of culture not because we necessarily want to teach the culture of the other country, but because we have to teach it. If we teach language without teaching at the same time the culture in which it operates, we are teaching meaningless symbols or symbols to which the student attaches the wrong meaning; for unless he is warned, unless he receives cultural instruction, he will associate American concepts or objects with the foreign symbols.**

Concurrent with that, culture is closely related to communication. According to Seelye, "**Communication is a social interaction much more than it is a linguistic exchange. It is communication that incorporates the verbal and the non-verbal features, both of which are culturally bound."**(1991:47). The idea that we can get from this is that grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation are essential but not enough for successful communication. Knowledge and awareness of such non-verbal aspects of language, attitudes, values, facial expressions, gestures, and other social conventions can help learners in avoiding communication breakdowns.

An illustration of non-verbal expressions is eye-contact. North Americans use direct eye contact to suggest interest, attentiveness, while Japanese and Koreans avoid direct eye contact because it is impolite in their culture. These details are important for the learners to consider so as avoiding misunderstanding. Byram (1991:47) believes that if we teach language without teaching culture, **" the pupils cannot be said to be learning foreign language in the proper sense."** Along the same lines, since language and culture are inseparable, language teaching is culture teaching. Valdes (1990:68) states: **"every language lesson is about something and that something is cultural."**

In considering the other reasons which have raised the importance of teaching culture, Tomalin (1993) explains that there are some linguistic and socioeconomic factors which have highlighted the study of culture. The travelling abroad of students from different countries to learn English has led most countries to give more consideration to culture in their curriculums and textbooks.

All these reasons combined have increased the need to integrate culture in FLT.

1.6. Instructional Techniques and Strategies for Teaching Culture

In order to communicate effectively in the target language, foreign language students should be facilitated to feel, touch, smell, and see the foreign people and not just hear their language. To achieve this goal, cultural activities and objectives should be carefully designed and incorporated into the lesson plan to enrich the teaching content.

Several language experts in the field of FLT have discussed several techniques and strategies that can be used in the classroom when teaching language and culture in an integrative manner. The most important of these techniques include:

1.6.1. Authentic Materials

Sources from the native speech community such as films, broadcasts, television shows, websites, magazines, newspapers, and restaurant menus can help students engage in authentic cultural experience, so that they can use the language effectively in different situations (Rivers, 1987). Discussion topics might include non –verbal behaviors (the physical distance between speakers, gestures, eye contact, and how people in different social roles relate to each other.

1.6.2. Culture Capsule and Culture Cluster

Culture capsules was developed by Taylor and Sorenson (1961), who define it as "**a short talk about a minimal cultural difference between the target-language culture and the student's own culture"**. (Cited in Risager 2007:41)That is to say, students are asked to prepare a talk about a particular TC issue; such as, telephoning, clothing, greeting... etc. After that, students compare and contrast the foreign situation with the native one. It is preferable to support the talk by the use of "realia". The whole work should be put in a capsule for

later use. A number of" culture capsules" dealing with the same theme forms a culture cluster. The concept was developed by Meade and Moraine (1973). Students role play the target culture situation prepared in class. Culture capsules and culture clusters simultaneously compare cultures for the sake of developing intercultural communication.

1.6.2. Mini-Drama and Role-Play

Gordon was the first who uses mini-dramas to raise the students" awareness about cultural communicative problems. Seelye (1993) pointed out that in mini-drama, students dramatize a situation in which people from two different cultures come across each other and thus cultural misunderstanding and communicative difficulties occur. The reason of misunderstanding does not appear only after the action has been terminated. After that, the teacher and students engage in a discussion about the characters and the reasons of the conflict. Role-play on the other hand; provide face-to-face verbal exchanges and interpersonal involvement within different cultural contexts. According to Kasper and Dahl (1991) role-play (be it elicited conversation, open-ended role play, or simulation) grants a life-like target cultural experience, **"they represent oral production, full operation of the turn-taking mechanism ... and negotiation of global and local [issues]..." (Gelato, 2005:15).**

1.6.3. Literature

Culture can best find its expression through the medium of literature as Valdes (1986:137) notes **"literature is viable component of second language programs at the appropriate level and…one of its major functions is to serve as a medium to transmit the culture of the people who speak the language in which it is written."** Generally, literature in FL teaching offers a considerable space for learners to discuss, explore, and critically think in one's own and others"

cultures. Such a reflective atmosphere helps consolidating learners‟ knowledge of the FL culture, while at the same time maintain a learner-centered approach.

1.6.4. Exploring Proverbs

The study of proverbs from different cultures is a good technique to teach culture and cultural awareness because it can lead to a discussion about stereotypes or values represented in the proverbs of both cultures. Proverbs form a significant part of every language and knowing them is a plus for every learner.

1.6.5. Students as experts

Student's research is one of the most powerful tools that can be used in the classroom, because it combines learner's interest with classroom activities. A teacher for example may ask his learners to search on the internet or library to find information on any aspect of the target culture that interests them. According to Stern (1992:229) **"research techniques allow learners to find out information by themselves and approach the new society with an open-mind".**

1.7. Conclusion

The inseparability of language and culture is a fact in the field of FLT. When teaching the language one has to teach its culture as well. Culture cannot be separated from the social context of any language. Only if culture is integrated in language teaching, the whole teaching process would be complete. Therefore, it is necessary to introduce culture in foreign language textbooks because they serve as basic sources of knowledge. In the view of that, Chapter two attempts to show how culture is integrated and evaluated in EFL textbooks.

CHAPTER TWO: Evaluating the Cultural Content of Foreign Language Textbooks

2.1. Introduction……22

2.2. The Textbook…….....22

2.2.1 Definition of the Textbook……22

2.2.2. The Role of Textbooks in EFL Classrooms…….....23

2.2.3. Justification of Textbook Evaluation…….....25

2.3. Checklists for Evaluating the Cultural Content of Textbooks…….....26

2.3.1. Skierso's Checklist……26

2.3.2. Byram's Model…….....27

2.3.3. Sercu's Checklist…….....29

2.3.4. Other Available Checklists…….....30

2.3.5. A Tentative Checklist for Textbook Evaluation…….....32

2.4. Conclusion…….....36

2.1. Introduction

Textbooks are perceived by many to be the route map of any ELT program and instruments of extraordinary power in the field of education. In fact, they may be the most effective of educational technologies yet invented, and there is no reason why we should imagine the future of the educational systems without textbooks taking the lead role. Thus, it is in our best interest to pay close attention to their role and function but most importantly their content. For this reason, textbook development and evaluation has always been the subject of debate

Accordingly, this chapter provides the reader with an overview of the textbook including its definition and the different roles it plays in the foreign language classrooms. In addition to this, it sheds the light on the several reasons for textbook evaluation. Then it engages in a critical review of most frequently adopted evaluation schemes and checklists through emphasizing the way they deal with culture contextualization. At the end it puts forward the need for a multimodal approach which will cater for the cultural make-up of EFL textbooks.

2.2. The Textbook

2.2.1. The Textbook Defined

A textbook, according to Richards & Schmidt (2001:550) “is a book on a specific subject used as a teaching /learning guide.” For English as a second or foreign language, a textbook is used to refer to a manual of instruction or a teaching material which presents the subject matter defined by the curriculum and which covers multiple skills that students are required to learn during a course period including listening, speaking, reading, writing and grammar and the like. **“A textbook is a collection of knowledge, concepts, and principles of a selected topic or course.**” Fredericks (2010:59).

It's usually written by one or more teachers, college professors, or education experts who are authorities in a specific field. Most textbooks are accompanied by teacher guides, which provide a teacher with supplemental teaching materials, ideas, and activities to use throughout the academic year.

Textbooks contain an incredible amount of facts, data, and texts and beyond this we may find explicit references to a great number of norms, rules, and patterns of behaviour displayed by different societies. **"In addition to transmitting knowledge, textbooks also seek to anchor the political and social norms of a society. Textbooks convey a global understanding of history ,and of the rules of society as well as norms of living with other people**" (Schissler, 1990:81).

2.2.2. The Role of Textbooks in the EFL Classroom

As you visit classrooms, you probably notice that most, if not all, of those classrooms use a standard textbook series. A textbook has always been the most preferred instructional material in ELT. They are best seen as a resource in achieving aims and objectives that have already been set concerning learner needs. As Hutchinson and Torres (1994:315) suggest:

> **The textbook is an almost universal element of [English language] teaching. Millions of copies are sold every year, and numerous aid projects have been set up to produce them in [various] countries…No teaching-learning situation, it seems, is complete until it has its relevant textbook.**

Accordingly, Richard (2001) stated that textbooks act as a key component in most language program because they provide a clear structure and a syllabus. They are designed to give cohesion to the language teaching and learning process by providing direction, specific language-based activities aimed at classroom practice for students.

Other theorists such as Sheldon (1988:237) agree with this observation and suggest that textbooks not only "represent the visible heart of any ELT program" but also offer considerable advantages for both the teacher and the student. In addition to being a learning instrument, the textbook is used as a supporting teaching instrument for less experienced or inexperienced teacher. In this vein, the textbook had multiple roles in EFL classroom and could serve as: (1) a resource for presenting material (spoken and written); (2) a source of activities for learner practice and communicative interaction; (3) a reference source for learners on grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation. (4) A source of stimulation and ideas for language activities; (5) a resource for self-directed learning or self-access work, (6) a support for less experienced teachers. Cunningsworth (1995)

Student can also benefit from using the textbooks in many different ways. Students can use the textbook as a tool for revision of previously taught items, at the same time familiarizing themselves with the item they will learn. More importantly, it secures students as they know what to expect and what is expected from them.(Richards,2001).Another asserted advantage of the textbook is their role as a material which foster learner's needs even if they are not designed specifically designed for them (O'Neill 1982) . Altbach (1991:257) suggests that: "**Textbooks are one of the most important educational inputs: texts reflect basic ideas about a national culture, and […] are often a flash-point of cultural struggle and controversy"**

Despite the impact of new technologies, textbooks will doubtless continue to play an important role in language teaching and provide a useful resource for both teachers and learners.

2.2.3. Justification of Textbook Evaluation

In almost all the countries, whenever the educational system encounters problems in the foreign language teaching/learning process, the textbook will stand as the primary agent to be in charge of the deficiency. So, in almost all the cases, any educational failure is attributed directly to the textbook. Therefore, textbook designers should ensure that "that careful selection is made, and that the materials selected closely reflect [the needs of the learners and] the aims, methods, and values of the teaching program." (Cunningsworth, 1995:12).

Textbook evaluation is intended to serve a kind of “educational judgment”, as Hutchinson and waters (1987:55) note that textbook evaluation **“is a matter of judging the fitness of something for a particular purpose”.** Sheldon (1988) has mentioned several reasons lying behind textbook evaluation. He pointed out that a thorough evaluation the teaching staff of a particular institution or organization to discriminate between all of the available textbooks on the market and then make the appropriate choice. Additionally, such an evaluation has the advantage to guide teachers in identifying the strengths and weaknesses of the textbook already in use. Consequently provide teaching with helping hand in making optimum use of the book’s strong points and recognizing the shortcomings of certain texts and tasks.

Accordingly, Gunningworth (1995) and Ellis (1997) affirm that textbook evaluation allows language teachers to acquire useful, accurate

systematic and contextual insights into the overall nature of textbook material. Finally, textbook evaluation may unveil issues related to the hidden curriculum as concerns culture teaching and other perspectives that influence the success of the foreign language education.

2.3. Checklists for Evaluating the Cultural Content in Textbooks

Evaluating FL materials is always a complex process. First, it demands the assessment of the content of the textbook in relation to its aims and objectives. That is to say we should consider to what extent the goal of cultural instruction is stated in the teacher's book, that is whether it is primary, or subordinate to other goals. Accordingly, consideration should be given to the way the cultural content is presented in context (for instance, through texts, tasks, and dialogues…) (Cortazzi, 1999)

The existing literature in textbook evaluation suggests several checklists of evaluation criteria. Despite its importance in teaching materials, some checklists do not mention cultural content and focus more on linguistic content, the structure and methodology. The questions related to the cultural dimension are often discarded and left at the end and asked in an implicit way as if of secondary importance. The following review highlights how some of the checklists approach the cultural content

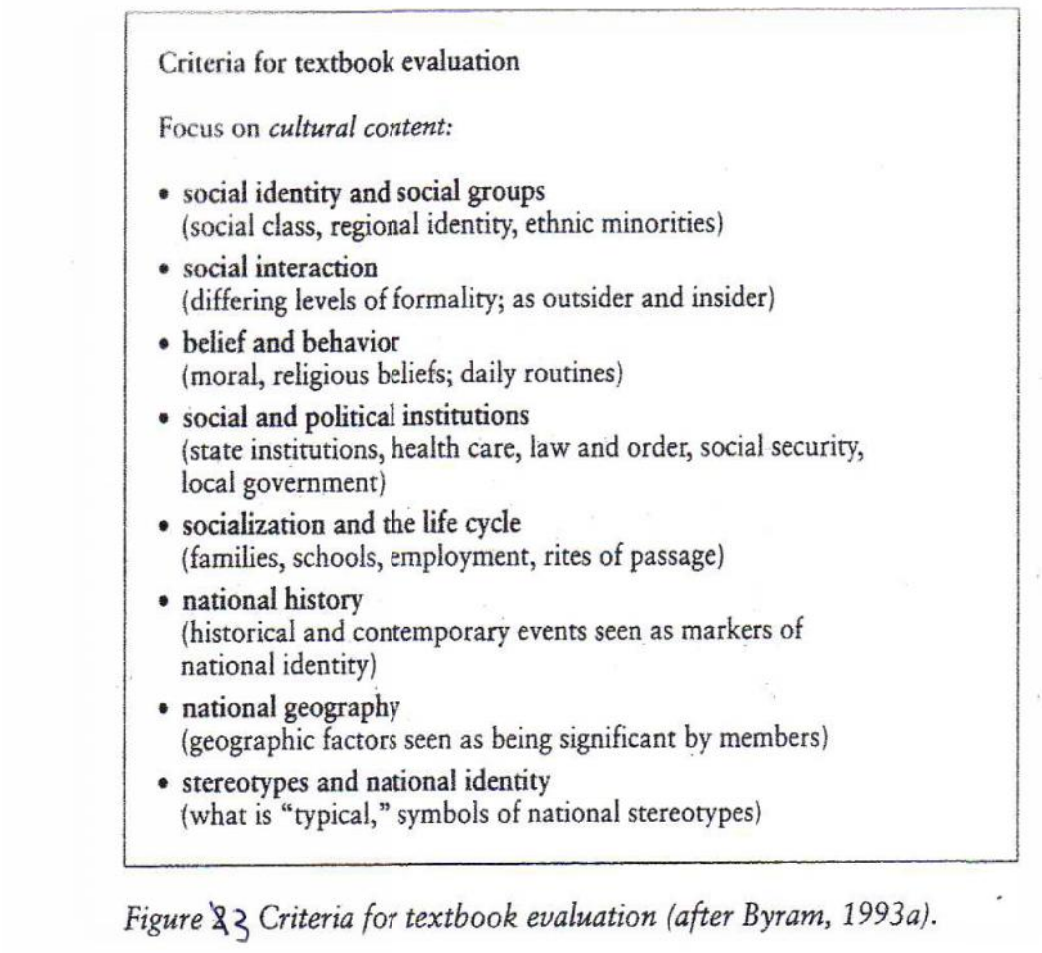
2.3.1. Skierso's Checklist

Skierso's (1991) paradigm takes into account the extent to which cultural content is implemented in texts, tasks, and dialogues and whether this knowledge reproduces stereotypes. Moreover, she points out to the necessity of contextualizing cultural information and providing a wide range of authentic texts to help learners enhance their "cultural skills". Skierso (as cited in Merrouche, 2006:134) asks questions about whether the textbook is:

- Giving factually accurate and up-to-date information;
- Avoiding stereotypes of gender, race, and culture;
- Presenting a phenomena in context rather than isolated facts;
- Explicitly relating historical material to contemporary society and ;

2.3.2. Byram's Model

In his proposed checklist which considered as one of the most thorough lists of criterion of textbook evaluation, Byram (1993) focuses on cultural content outstandingly. It includes a focus on eight areas in the following figure:


Criteria for textbook evaluation

Focus on *cultural content:*

- **social identity and social groups**
  (social class, regional identity, ethnic minorities)
- **social interaction**
  (differing levels of formality; as outsider and insider)
- **belief and behavior**
  (moral, religious beliefs; daily routines)
- **social and political institutions**
  (state institutions, health care, law and order, social security, local government)
- **socialization and the life cycle**
  (families, schools, employment, rites of passage)
- **national history**
  (historical and contemporary events seen as markers of national identity)
- **national geography**
  (geographic factors seen as being significant by members)
- **stereotypes and national identity**
  (what is "typical," symbols of national stereotypes)

Figure 3 Criteria for textbook evaluation (after Byram, 1993a).

Another textbook evaluation model was proposed by Byram and Escarte Sarrie (1991:83) in which they assert, that authenticity and realism are crucial components in a textbook. This latter should portray culture **"as it is lived and talked about by people who are credible and recognizable as real human beings"** .for them assessing cultural authenticity should follow four major dimensions:

- **Micro-Social Level:** It is a matter of analyzing the social and geographic identities of the characters described in the textbook to confirm whether they form a representative sample of the TC. There should be a clear description of the target population in the textbook (i.e., urban, middle class), and which part of it will be the focal point of analysis. The social interactions of these characters must be taking into consideration while avoiding stereotyped ones. Furthermore, reference should be made to the characters and the emotions they express (sadness, happiness, problems, worries**...).**
- **Macro-Social Level:** This level is concerned with the representations of general facts that draw on the target culture making its general picture. In other words, the cultural identity of the country that is made up by the historical facts is what the evaluation targets. It takes into consideration other aspects that make up the target culture such as the socio-political and economic aspects. So the aim is for foreign learners to function properly in the target culture society the thing that can only be done by understanding a real image of the target society.
- **Inter-cultural Level:** In this stage, textbook analysts should figure out whether learners are asked to deal with the mutual representations of foreign and native culture, and this can be done through identifying stereotypes, Comparing and contrasting their native culture with the TC. in order to indorse global intercultural understanding and tolerance.

- **Author's Standpoint:** The author's view point can be deduced from the characters that operate as intermediaries carrying out the foreign culture reality, and from the advice given to learners to handle unfamiliar foreign situations. Moreover, the evaluative statements of the author and the overall impression one holds from the way the TC is described are a guide to analyse the author's ideology in the textbooks (Byram and Escarte-Sarrie , op.cit: 177-183).

2.3.3. Sercu's Checklist

Emphasizing on "representativeness" and "realism" as a key factor in evaluating textbooks from cultural dimension, Sercu (1998:271-272) puts four major layers to weight the cultural content in textbooks namely: representativeness and realism - character depiction - language - cultural content Some questions are about the textbooks themselves and others are related to the characters in the textbook.

The questions about the textbooks are the following:

- What image is presented: a royal (free from problems and incidents) or a realistic one?
- Does the textbook only present a tourist point of view?
- Are teachers and learners encouraged to consult additional material on the topics dealt with?
- Is a historical perspective presented and used to explain certain present-day features of mentality or national character?

The set of questions provided by Sercu concerning the characters in the textbooks are:

- Are the characters in the book representative of the foreign society with regard to their age, social class, interests, mentality, family situations, etc?

- Do the characters meet foreigners or members from other nationalities living in their country and are misunderstandings which might arise from these encounters dealt with?
- Do photographs show ordinary people?

2.3.4. Other Available Checklists

Slightly more elaborate are Sheldon's (1988) and Cunningsworth's (1995) evaluation checklists. Thus, Sheldon's list (1988) highlights the materials' appropriateness, authenticity and cultural bias. He further encourages teachers to ask whether the course book presents any stereotyped images of gender, race, social class or nationality; and whether different uncomfortable social realities of the United States or Britain – such as unemployment, poverty, family breakdowns or racism – are omitted from textbooks.

Cunningsworth draws attention to the cultural skills as well as cultural knowledge by asking whether the content is culture specific or non-culture specific; whether it is subordinate to language learning or not; and whether the cultural contexts help learners in perceiving and categorizing social situations they may find themselves in (Cunningsworth 1995: 92). He asks the following questions:

- Are the social and cultural contexts in the course book comprehensible to the learner?
- Can learners interpret the relationships, behaviours, intentions etc… of the characters portrayed in the book?
- Are women given equal prominence to men in all aspects of the course book?
- What physical and character attributes are women given?
- What professional and social positions are women shown as occupying?
- What do we learn about the inner lives of the characters?
- To what extent is the language of feeling depicted?
- Do the course book characters exist in some kind of social setting, within a social

Ferit Kilickaya (2004) also provides some guidelines to evaluate a textbook for cultural information. He advises teachers to ask themselves the following questions in order to evaluate to what extent textbooks include the intercultural dimension:

- Does the book give any information, instructions or suggestions about how the book may be used and how the cultural content may be handled?
- Does the book address specific learners or are there any characteristics of the learners that the book addresses to?
- Does the book suggest any role that the teachers using it should have?
- Does the book include a variety of cultures or just specific ones such as British or American culture?
- Does the book represent the reality about the target culture or the author's view?
- Where is the cultural information taken from? Author's own ideas or empirical research?
- What subjects does the book cover? Are these specific to the target culture? Are there any topics that might not be culturally suitable for the learners in class?
- What cultural and social groups are represented? Are there any stereotypes?
- Is the cultural information presented with comments such as being good or being bad? Or is it presented without such comments?
- Are there illustrations? If so, are these appropriate to the learners' native culture?
- What are the activities asked of the learners? Are they familiar to the learners?
- Would a teacher using this book need specialized training to be able to use it or is there enough information given?

Sheldon (1988, cited in Skopinskaja 2003: 43) maintains that **"[…] course book assessment is fundamentally a subjective rule-of thumb activity, and no neat formula, grid or system will ever provide a definite yardstick".**

2.3.5. A Tentative Checklist for Textbook Evaluation

The present overview of various textbook evaluation checklists provides us with a sound basis for establishing our own evaluation checklist of foreign language teaching materials from a cultural perspective, which was one of our objectives. In our work we will draw on these criteria to investigate the cultural content of the textbook examined. The model was elaborated by the researcher and adapted from **Merrouche Sarah's PhD Thesis** (2006). This textbook evaluation checklist is divided into three major sections: general presentation of the textbook, content, and techniques of presentation of content. The first section, general presentation of the textbook, gives general information about (the Name of textbook selected for the analysis, Number of pages etc).The second section, content, is further divided into four major parts: micro-social analysis, macro-social analysis, intercultural analysis and analysis of the stand point of the author(s).At this stage a careful analysis of the cultural content in the textbook will be done. The last section, techniques of presentation of content, gathers information about the techniques, types of texts and tasks used to teach culture.

Textbook evaluation checklist

Textbook Evaluation Checklist

(Adapted from Merrouche, op.cit)

Section One	
Name of the Textbook	Level
Author(s)	Publisher
Year / Place of Publication	Number of Pages

Textbook Evaluation Checklist		Excellent	Good	Adequate	Poor	Totally Lacking
2	**Content**					
2.1	**General Analysis of the Textbook Content**					
2.1.1	On which basis are the textbook units organized (functions, structures, topics)?					
2.1.2	Is the information on the target culture integrated in the course or added at the end of every unit or even presented in a separate unit at the end of the course book?					
2.1.3	Does the course book deal with big “C” culture, small “c” culture or culture general issues?					

2.1.4	Is it suitable to the learners' age, level, cultural background and interests?					
2.2	**Micro- Social Level**					
2.2.1	Are the characters in the book representative of the foreign society with regard to their age, social class, interests, mentality, family situations, etc?					
2.2.2	Does the textbook introduce the pupils to famous TC figures?					
2.2.3	Are the characters of the book credible?					
2.3	**Macro-Social Level**					
2.3.1	Is the cultural content given a historical dimension?					
2.3.2	Does the textbook provide adequate knowledge of the geography of the country in question?					
2.3.3	Is there information on socio-political and socio-economic problems such as unemployment, immigration, crime…?					
2.4	**Intercultural analysis**					
2.4.1	Does the textbook activate learner's knowledge of the target language culture? Is the cultural information portrayed in comparative framework?					

2.4.2	Do the textbook provide authentic, richer, and more varied language input?					
2.4.3	Do cultural incidents occur? Is there reference to situations where a person with good mastery of English is not understood because of cultural difference?					
2.4.4	Is there a reference to several TL-speaking cultures?					
2.5	**Analysis of the Standpoint of the Author**					
2.5.1	Is the cultural content accompanied with evaluative comments, either explicitly or implicitly?					
2.5.2	Are the teachers and learners encouraged to consult additional materials on the topics dealt with?					
3	**Techniques of Presentation and Practice**					
3.1	Is culture integrated in texts, tasks and dialogues?					
3.2	What are the techniques used for presenting the cultural content? (Role-Play, minidrama					
3.3	Are there any photographs of people, places? (Black and white or colored? Up-to date or not?) Are there any drawings, cartoons, maps, diagrams?					

2.4. Conclusion

This chapter has examined the textbook as an important instrumental material. It has also presented several models for evaluating its cultural content. On these grounds, the third chapter will examine the place of culture in the secondary English textbook „Getting Through".

CHAPTER THREE: Evaluation of the Cultural Content of 'Getting Through'

3.1. Introduction.....38

3.2. General Presentation of the Textbook.....38

3.3. Content.....38

3.3.1. General Analysis of the Textbook Content.....38

3.3.2. Micro-Social Analysis.....44

3.3.3. Macro-Social Analysis.....45

3.3.4. In-depth cultural Analysis.....46

3.3.5. Analysis of the Stand Point of the Author.....48

3.4. Techniques of Presentation of Content.....49

3.5. Conclusion.....51

3.1. Introduction

As viewed in chapter two, EFL textbooks are comprised of several components, including grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, the four language skills (listening speaking and writing), communicative skills and culture. The latter component is indisputably an integral part in textbooks. The present chapter examines the cultural content integrated in the course book "Getting Through" on the basis of the textbook evaluation guide elaborated in the previous chapter.

3.2. General Presentation of the Textbook

- Name of textbook: "Getting Through"

- Level of Proficiency: 2nd Grade in Secondary Cycle (Sixth year of English as FL2).

- Author(s):

Mr. B.Riche

Mr. H.Ameziane

Mr. H.Hami

Mr. S.A.Arab

Mr. M.Bensemmane

- Publisher: The National Authority for School Publications O.N.P.S

- Year / place of publication: 2012/2013 Algeria

- Number of pages: 207

3.3 Content

3.3.1. General Analysis of the Textbook Content

The textbook selected for the current study is the 2nd year Secondary Education textbook entitled "Getting Through". It complies with the 2005 curriculum designed by the Ministry of education. It relies on the competency-based approach. It is not mentioned whereas the textbook is designed for all streams, but the great variety of topics leads us to assume that it is. The authors advise teachers to use the textbook as a resource book from which they can choose tasks and drop others depending on their schemes and their students' abilities. The textbook is composed of eight units, meant to be completed in 15 hours, each; the units are organized on a topical (thematic basis). The students are, as in every textbook of this series, to prepare projects after every unit.

The first page in each unit includes a photograph which demonstrates the main theme of the units, and a list of words with their alphabetic transcription that students will come across in the different stages of the units. The way units are introduced invites learners to speculate the content they will be exposed to. Moreover, each unit is divided into five main sections

- ✓ Discovering Language
- ✓ Developing skills
- ✓ Putting things together
- ✓ Where do we go from here?
- ✓ Exploring matters further

The authors add that the first two parts (Discovering Language and Developing Skills) are the main core of the teaching/learning process, and consider the other parts its benchmarks. The units are detailed below:

Unit	Unit title	Unit topic	Pages
1	Signs of time	Life styles	22
2	Make peace	Peace and conflicts resolution	22
3	Waste not, want not	World resources and sustainable development	20
4	Budding scientist	Science and experiments	20
5	News and tales	Literature and the media	20
6	No man is an island	Disasters and solidarity	19
7	Science or fiction	Technology and the arts	21
8	Business is business	Management and efficiency	21

Table 3.1: Files' Headings in "Getting Through"

Unit 1 opens with an original painting by the famous Algerian artist Mohammed Racim, which represents Ramadan Nights in ancient time in Algeria. Such picture reflects the home culture in terms of presenting how the Algerian used to celebrate Ramadan in the years ago. In this unit, the cultural component is varied: big "C" culture issues (e.g. art, geography, economy, agriculture, religion, science, climate, history, and architecture) and small „c" culture issues (e.g. life style, food, and clothes) are included. Cultural items in this unit are thematic universal turning around the major theme which is „life style" (how people dress and eat, fields of work, daily habits).an instance of the target cultural information embedded in this unit is presented in activity four (p.23) in which pupils are asked to figure out the various definitions of the word **can** in the tongue twister provided. In the view of that, finding these definitions is an overt emphasis on the linguistic component and the construction of the vocabulary not on the real value of the tongue twisters. Hence, it is preferable

that pupils are asked to explain the tongue twister and suggest one of the home culture to realise the similarities and differences that exist between the native culture and the target one. Many scholars insist on the efficiency of the comparative approach in raising student's awareness of the different cultural aspects and tongue twisters are one among these issues. It is apparent that the emphasis in Unit 1and even in the other units is on culture at an international scale, hence reference is made to both English-speaking countries and non-English speaking countries, such as America (unit 1,2,8) Germany (Unit 1,2),Italy (unit 1,2) , Britain(unit1,7) and Brazil (unit1,unit5). The cultural content suits the learners" level, interests, and background knowledge, i.e., topics dealt with are familiar to the pupils and simple to understand; such as, kinds of food, touristic places in Algeria and styles of clothes.

With Regard to the second unit, a list of famous international institutions accompanied with their corresponding acronyms (UNESCO, WHO, UNICEF, FAO...) The choice of this picture is suitable to the major objective of the unit" Make Peace " in the sense that all the aforementioned institutions advocate peace and promote tolerance between nations all over the globe. A discerning target culture aspect is represented in the extract of Martin Luther King"I Have a Dream"; the outstanding figure that fought against discrimination in America. Presenting such famous personalities is of a high importance since it gives insightful cultural knowledge of the people who speak the target culture. What is noticeable in this unit is the separation between language and culture since almost all the activities focus on developing linguistic competence (p.40-46-42).What is apparent also in this unit is that the majority of the cultural relevant issues are devoted for exploring matters further's rubric. This latter is dedicated for further reading and consolidation .Hence, not tackled in classroom and it is student's responsibility to deal with it.

A collection of postage stamps which represent the countries" natural resources was chosen as an introduction to Unit 3. This unit aims at raising students" awareness about saving natural energies, and the damages that may affect human resources. It tackles issues such as the importance of the Amazon rainforest, Exxon Valdez catastrophe,

solar energy, and noise pollution. All these topics attract the students‟ attention at a local and universal level. Some texts in Unit3 are not recent at the time when the textbook was first published in 2006.For, the „Amazon Rainforest‟ article (p60) goes back to 1960‟s and 1970‟s, and the same thing for „Exxon Valdez‟ report (p62) which is traced back to 1986. We wonder why including them while most of the textbook's content is up-to-date.

Unit 4 urges students to carry out scientific experiments. It introduces learners to scientific topics such as geometry, math, chemical products, and physics. This unit witnesses a fragmentation of language and culture except for two occasions. On page 88 students are asked to assimilate the role of a British person having a problem and requesting help from **"agony aunt"**, and in the second activity learners are supposed to resemble as an **"agony aunt"** and suggesting solutions for people.

Imagine you are in a dilemma; write a letter to an "agony aunt" to ask for advice.

Tip box

When the English have a problem and no one to turn to, one solution for them is to write to an „agony aunt‟ for help and advice. This is the person who answers readers‟ problems in a newspaper or magazine in Britain. A letter for seeking advice usually consists of three parts. An introduction where you say why you are writing. A short paragraph where you introduce yourself and another paragraph where you expose your problem and ask what you should do.

Now, imagine you are an "agony aunt". Read your partner's letter and reply by suggesting a solution to his/her problem. Keep the following plan:

- Introduction
- Expression of sympathy and reassurance
- Analysis of the problem

- Recommendations/suggestions

It is absolutely true that this activity introduces learners to an issue which is typical for the British society and gives them glimpse to the target language press. However, the main objective is to show learners steps included in writing letters. More activities of this type should have been included in the textbook.

Covers of famous newspapers and novels were selected as an opening for Unit 5. In this unit both big „C" culture issues (tsunami in the news, folktales, and metaphors) and small "c" culture issues (daily citizens' problems and accidents...) are taken into consideration. The short stories integrated in this unit give pupils lessons; for example, the folktale "little red riding hood" teaches students about caution.

Despite the fact that culturally based aspects are available in the sequence of exploring matters further, those literary texts are present only for their relation with the title of the unit; the underlined aims of exploring matters further in the textbook are purely linguistic.

We believe that using a proverb as the title of unit six **"No Man Is an Island"** is not appropriate, for learners cannot usually understand its figurative meanings without having an appropriate cultural background, and proverbs are not common for all pupils.

Quotes are the artistic products of societies; however, the cultural meaning that lies beneath these artefacts is not pointed out. For example activity 2(p123):

Turn the quotes into reported speech using the verbs given to you

A. "I doubt whether present-day Americans have become any happier since their grandfathers settled in the country." **Albert Einstein**

- Albert Einstein doubts/doubted..... .

B. "No man is an island." **John Donne**

- John Donne writes/wrote..... .

C. Three passions have governed my life: the longing for love, the search for knowledge, and an unbearable pity for the suffering of mankind."**Bertrand Russell**

- Bertrand Russell says/said.....

All the textbook's units end up with an assignment to learners (a project).This project in is a kind of recapitulation to the whole unit where students work on their skills and broaden their knowledge. However, we believe that the major objective of Unit6 is not linked to the final project because; the whole content is about promoting attitudes of tolerance, charity and support among people in disasters, and the project with which the unit is concluded is about people's readiness to face natural and man-made disasters.

The title of Unit seven, "Science or Fiction? ", gives the impression that the unit contains a number of fictional stories and imaginary scientific discoveries; however, the content of this unit does not reflect its title. The whole unit is about past inventions; such as, the discovery of computer, penicillin, nuclear physics, and gravity and so on; it is only in the section „exploring matters further", which is intended for further reading that students are provided with scientific and fictional texts.

The main objective behind Unit8 is to involve students in the world of job and business (writing business letters, job applications, and annual reports).The introductory picture of this unit is about the façade of the Algerian Bank, and a paper from a check book. The overall content relates to the Algerian context except, in the „reading and writing" section where we find an article entitled „American women at work". Moreover, in „putting things together" students are asked to write biographies about foreign economists (Frederick Taylor, John Galbraith, Milton Freedman, John Keynes...). It is worth mentioning that the passages intended for teaching pronunciation in the section „say it loud and clear" are culturally significant, say for example, short texts (Unit1, 3) ,dialogues (Unit2,7), short stories (Unit5),and poems (Unit6,8).

3.3.2. Micro-Social Analysis

The characters in "Getting Through" are largely varied and credible, because they are real persons portrayed in real situations and belonging to different sub-cultures, (workers p16, soldiers' p38, pupils' p44, laymen p103). Most of them are displayed in photographs and are in this manner made realistic and credible. However, in Unit 5 (News and Tales) and Unit 7 (Science or Fiction?), some of

the characters are imaginary personalities, and thus not real(Little Red Riding Hood (p104), Four Friends in Grimm's fairy tales (p106), Frankenstein (p155). A realistic presentation of culture information takes account of intrapersonal as well as interpersonal relationships. However, in "Getting Through" no reference is made to intrapersonal relationships, and the textbook refers mainly to interpersonal relationships between individuals in schools, help agencies, and work places, that is, the characters are not displayed as isolated individuals.

This textbook introduces the pupils to famous native and TL figures such as (the Algerian artist Mohammed Racim (p15), the British landscape painter William Turner (p33), the head of the international atomic energy agency Mohamed EL-Baradai (p42), Martin Luther King (p48) , Mariah Carey (p53), Al-Khwarizmi (p96) , Shakespeare (p99), Moufdi Zakaria (p112) , Bill Gates (p122),and so on) .However many of them are not put in their right context, that is , we are uncertain about the suitability of certain characters for some textbook's themes. The textbook is developed through eight unrelated units with a specific theme for each where the characters display different emotions such as happiness, sadness, fear, anger, worry or fright. We have noticed that the textbook treats culture as a human universal phenomena and no specific culture is targeted.

3.3.3. Macro-Social Analysis

As shown in the preceding sections, many cultures are involved at a time: American, Bulgarian, Japanese, Brazilian, but no adequate information is given. Consequently, the cultural information provided remains superficial and limited, and pupils will end up learning nothing. It would have been more culturally significant if only one English-speaking culture had been the pivot of learning. It is apparent that "Getting Through" targets no specific culture, and focuses on universal human concerns; such as, international peace (Unit2), human resources (Unit3), scientific discoveries (Unit4), natural disasters (Unit5), charity (Unit6), business (Unit8).

The pupils are also provided with a general historical overview of a particular cultural aspect such as scientific discoveries (Unit4), American women at work during Second World War (Unit8), and snake food game (Unit1).However, the historical material is related to contemporary society only two times: in Unit1 "signs of the time" where reference is made to life style in the past and in recent time (work, eating habits way of clothing) , and the history of peace in Unit2 "make peace!"(The history of "United Nations", "Martin Luther King, the man of peace") .Knowledge about geography is modest and mentioned only two times with the map of the Amazon Forest in Southern America and south-east Asia.

3.3.4. In depth-cultural analysis

A clear reference is made to similarities and differences between the native culture and the target culture is made only two times in unit one (what do people wear?) page27 and the ABC of dreams where learners are asked about how people interpret their dreams in page 92.

What is noticeable is that, the textbook at hand makes a little use, if at all, of the aspects of the English language culture .Almost all the cultural aspects presented in the textbook are purely Algerian .for instance ,in the first unit that deals with the topic of life styles, all the texts revolve around Algerian customs and traditions .moreover, the vocabulary introduced are taken from the learner's society .as a case in point, the textbook includes a text about eating habits in which the textbook authors go beyond the English vocabulary use and to colloquial Arabic terms like ***Mesfouf*** and **El Maida** and even personalities are usually Arab ones like Uncle ***Hassan, Rashid*** and others. Therefore, the majority of texts and listening scripts are adapted, modified, and simplified in order to quit the present study's principles.

However, culturally relevant and authentic issues are found at the end of each unit, in rubric entitled "Exploring Matters Further" where illustrations, games,

songs, authentic texts are included. Unfortunately, these materials are not given relevant importance since this part is not intended to be taught, it is not included in the official syllabus program. Thus this part is just designed for further reading and consolidation.

Along the same lines, the main aim of any language foreign course is to brainstorm learner's knowledge about the foreign language culture .this mainly done through tasks that activates learner's knowledge and involve them in discussions about the cultural aspects of the target language.

Usually, activities which are designed to activate learner's knowledge of the target language and culture are set at the beginning of each task or they stand as an introduction to the beginning of each task .each unit starts with relative picture followed by "Discovering Language" activity .the majority of picture are selected to match the Algerian culture .unit one which treats the topic of "life styles" is accompanied with a picture(p.15) that represents Ramadan Nights in Algeria " .unit two" Make Peace" starts with a picture(p.39) that shows Algerian soldiers working the United Nation Organization .another example is taken from unit eight "Business is Business ";this unit starts with a picture of an Algerian Bank. Furthermore, the bank is in Arabic .related to the above examples about how each unit is introduced to learners ,the coming issues are based on those pictures .consequently, the target language are rarely discussed within the context if it is neglected at all. As it has been noticed, through the analysis of the target textbook, textbook writers attempt to make English language use within the Algerian cultural mould and context.

One of the major aspects writers of the current textbook advocate is the use of authentic texts and materials. However, the textbook is not accompanied with any listening script or an audio CD by means of which students can practice listening. Since authenticity necessitates exposure to real life language not only in written form, but the spoken form as well. Therefore, if the vocabulary is

relevant to learner's proficiency level, it may be interesting for them as long as is not produced by native speakers. The original contexts in which the words are produced is neglected, as a result, the input provided lose its authenticity.

We have noticed that the dialogues in "Getting Through" are either formal(El-Baradai/journalist(p42),Mr Welling/Jim/Mrs Clarkson/Dr Jones in a radio talk(p179),personal assistant/personnel manager (p186)) , or informal(car owner/Mechanic(p84),Maya/Leila two Algerian students(p180)) taking place in intra-cultural situations , that is , the two parties belong to the same culture . However, we believe that it would have been more beneficial for pupils if interactions take place at an intercultural level, thereby, pupils learn how to cope with conflicting situations and cultural incidents, tolerate cultural diversity, and avoid breakdowns in communication. One should not ignore the fact that conflicts may happen because of the differences between the native culture and the target one even to good foreign language learners.

It is remarked that several TL-speaking countries are mentioned in "Getting Through" (England, Northern European countries , Northern Africa , Africa, America , Bulgaria , Italy , Germany , Japan , Brazil , los Angeles , South-East Asian). However, information about these countries remains inadequate and fragmentary.

3.3.5. Analysis of the Stand Point of the Author

The authors‟ viewpoint about intercultural learning/teaching is not apparent in "Getting Through" although, there is a part in this book ("to the student" p4-5 and "to the teacher" p6-7) in which the authors could have stated explicitly their attitudes, given advice and provided evaluative comments about the whole content including culture (see Appendix I). However, after going through the textbook's units one can get the impression that the authors aim at strengthening the learners' own identity that is, the foreign culture and the pupils' native culture are given equal importance. Following this line of thought, Algeria is given due care the native country of the pupils. Moreover, learners and teachers

are not encouraged to consult other materials and this textbook is considered as the ultimate source for learning the English language. Furthermore, the authors tend to promote positive attitudes towards foreign cultures without having ideological tendencies with the intension of promoting cultural globalization. What should equally be highlighted is the fact that the textbook's content depicts the world in general, and no particular English-speaking culture has been chosen.

3.4. Techniques of Presentation of Content

Culture is contextualized and integrated in texts, dialogues, poems, songs, and newspaper articles, but not in activities. The textbook offers a Varity of texts (e.g. narratives(Unit1,5,7), explanatory texts(Unit3,4), dialogues(Unit6,7,8), songs(Unit2,5),poems(Unit8), newspaper articles(Unit2,3,5,6), proverbs(Unit6), and metaphors(Unit5) that target communicative and linguistic competences, that is, culture is supplementary to the linguistic aspect .

We have noticed that the textbook's cultural content is randomly selected, and this fact resulted in an incoherent, fragmented content. The techniques used for presenting cultural information are geared only for comprehension (e.g. explanations, answer simple comprehension questions) and not for production (e.g. role plays, problem solving activities). Students are just required to handle data as separate facts, and not to reflect on the underlying principles behind them, or think about the reason behind their occurrence.

Moreover, the textbook provides learners with both authentic (reprinted from original sources, reprinted with adaptation) and non-authentic (prepared for this textbook) texts. Consequently, learners will be able to strengthen their knowledge of grammar and functional English, develop language skills and discover various kinds of texts; for instance, how letters (p91), reports (accident report, p 111) ... are written.

One important point is that learners cannot rely on the cultural content of "Getting Through" to develop cultural knowledge and understanding, because they are not trained to do so through practice activities and tasks. We wonder

why the authors did not include cultural capsules and clusters, critical incidents, culture assimilators, role plays.

We assume that the pupils are supposed to learn about the way people engage in exchanges in Algeria and abroad, and then role play it to reflect the native and TC ways. Role play as a communicative activity gives learners the freedom to choose what and how to say, just like in real socio-cultural contexts. However, this is not the case in the whole textbook as illustrated in the following activity in unit 2:

- **Listen and mark with a prime („) the word you hear most among the words written in bold in the snippet below.**

  Leila: ok, you made fun of me.

  Maya: **No, I didn't**.

  Leila: **Yes, you did**. You said I was stupid.

  Maya: When?

  Leila: Yesterday, in front of all my classmates.

  Maya: **Did I**? I'm sorry I shouldn't have said that.

  Leila: But **you did**.

This activity in our opinion does not reflect the normal pattern of conversations in the foreign cultures (see pp 44-46).In addition, it seems that the main objective behind the inclusion of dialogues is to teach learners about language functions, grammar items, and pronunciation.

With regard to the textbook physical appearance, the current textbook proves to show an acceptable presentation to the learners, the fact that increases their motivation and more important to get them involved in the learning process. In terms of practical considerations, the target textbook is satisfactory and well organized .this latter, uses a variety of beautiful, colourful, and real pictures is a point that can actually be referred to as one of its strengths .in the current textbook, illustrations and picture both cartoons and real ones taken either from the internet pages or real photos and make the situations more real –like.

Throughout the textbook, the page devoted for unit topic presentation is provided with a detailed picture as well as the unit theme which together have an important effect in activating the student's background knowledge.

In this textbook, culture is displayed through photographs (of people and places) drawings, maps, diagrams, and drawings. Sometimes, they are arranged from the familiar to the unfamiliar (i.e., from the native culture to the target culture) like in (unit 1 and 2), and other times, vice versa, graded from the unfamiliar items to the familiar ones (i.e., from the target culture to the native culture) as it is found in (unit 4 and 6).However, sometimes we feel that the textbook is overloaded with unnecessarily drawings (p55, 68,143,144) and diagrams (p80, 132,174).another disadvantage found in the textbook is that it makes use of some modified pictures or "photo shops";these can possibly make the students lose confidence in the textbook's credibility

3.5. Conclusion

This chapter brings in a systematic analysis of the cultural content of the textbook "Getting Through". The results derived from this analysis show that culture exists to some extent in all the textbook's units. However, the problem is that culture is reduced to serve linguistic objectives. This fact has resulted in random cultural selections and incoherent cultural contents.

CHAPTER FOUR: Field Work

4.1. Introduction.....53

4.2. Research Methodology and Means of Research.....53

4.3. Inspectors' Interview…….....54

4.3.1. Aims of the Interview…….....55

4.3.2. Interview Procedure……..... 55

4.3.3. Description of the Interview……..... 56

4.4. Analysis of the Inspectors' Interview…… 56

4.4.1. Results of the Interview…….....57

4.4.2. Interpretation of the Results……..... 60

4.5. Classroom Observation…….....61

4.5.1. Aims of the classroom observation…….....61

4.5.2. Procedure of Classroom Observation…….....62

4.6. Classroom observation's result and discussion..... 62

4.6.1. Overcrowded and Noisy Classrooms..... 62

4.6.2. Respect of CBA procedure with reference to culture teaching…..63

4.6.3. Lack of Cultural Syllabus…….....64

4.7. Interpretation of the Findings…….....64

4.8. Conclusion.....65

4.9. Pedagogical Implications and Recommendations…….....65

4.9.1. Implications for Textbook Designers.....66

4.9.2. Implications for Secondary School Teachers.....67

4.1. Introduction

It is extremely important that textbooks include culture as an important component. Yet, it is the teachers' responsibility to make learners familiar with the target culture. That is, teaching culture is massively dependent on textbooks, in addition to the teachers' attempts to integrate it into language classes.

In accordance with the rationale of the research, this chapter is devoted to the description and the interpretation of the findings stored out from the inspector's interview and the classroom observation. In order to investigate the aforementioned issues further and to check the validity of the already set hypothesis about the textbook under consideration, an interview was designed for inspectors of English language at secondary level. To investigate teacher's perceptions concerning the way culture is taught in their classrooms classroom observation was opted for.

4.2. Research Methodology and means of research:

It would be too shallow and superficial to assume that choosing a method is dependent on the researcher's views, likes, dislikes, and preferences. However, the choice of the method is rather totally determined by the nature of the topic and dependent upon the nature of data and the aim of the research and the sample to be investigated.

Concerning the current study, the most appropriate method is the qualitative case study approach which facilitates the exploration of a phenomenon within its context using a variety of data sources. This ensures that the issue is not explored through one lens, but rather a variety of lenses which allows for multiple facets of the phenomenon to be revealed and understood. Since the present study is dealing with the evaluation of the textbook, it is obviously that the adoption of textbook evaluation checklist will serve the study.

That is to say, it concentrates on highlighting the cultural elements which are included in the textbook. Besides, an inspector's interview was opted for to further investigate the issue. Additionally, a classroom observation will be carried out to unveil teachers' perceptions of culture in EFL classrooms and the techniques they use in transmitting the cultural feature of the TC to their learners.

As for sample population, the data will be gathered from two inspectors of English language in charge of secondary school teachers as they are well-acquainted with "Getting Through "textbook .Moreover, to get a clear view on the target language cultural component of the course. The researcher has carried a classroom observation in three different secondary schools in Oum El Bouaghi. The choice of this sample is due to the fact that the researcher resides in this Wilaya; thus, problems of cost, time, and access to schools can be easily solved.

4.3. Inspectors' Interview

An equally well known qualitative data collection method in case study research is interviewing. Broadly speaking, an interview can be described as a direct face to face attempt to obtain reliable and valid measures in the form of verbal responses from one or more respondents. In Nunan's words, an interview is "**the elicitation of data by one person from another through person-to-person encounters"** (Nunan, 1992:231).

In fact, interviewing comes in many different forms that range from structured, semi structured to structured interviews. The choice of a given type is determined by the nature of the researcher and the degree of control of interview wishes to exert (ibid).The structured interview consists of a set of questions that are prepared in advance and administered to all the respondents in the same order and format.

In this study, the researcher has opted for a structured interview, as data gathering tools. One of the main advantages of a structured interview is that gives the interviewer a degree of power and control over the course of the interview. Besides, misunderstanding, or lack of understanding, can be immediately sorted out during the exchange of information.

4.3.1. Aims of the Interview

The main aim of the interview is to display the importance of integrating culture within the English syllabus. Accordingly, it aims at providing the researcher with in depth understanding of the inspector's perceptions of the textbook and assessing the weight of the cultural component as incorporated in the Algerian textbook of English "**Getting Through SE2**"

The objective of using structured interview in this study is to enhance the validity of the collected data so that it will not reflect only the researcher's judgments (Textbook evaluation checklist) and the idea may be explored more thoroughly.

4.3.2. Interview Procedure

The interview was piloted with an English teacher before conducting it with the whole population. The reason behind this is to check the quality of the questions and the way of asking them in order to get data of good quality. Some questions were omitted and others were reformulated till reaching their relevance to both to the objective and the topic. Besides, to have an idea about how long it will take.

Taking into account the ethical considerations mainly the idea of informed consent, the interviewer has explained to the interviewees all what concerns the interview and the way data will be collected for it is important to gain interviewee's permission. It should be mentioned that the researcher relied on

note taking to record information, thus, a space has been left after each question to write down the interviewee's answers and comments. Each interview took an average of 25 minutes. The subjects were informed in advance and their consent was given to record and use their answers.

4.3.3. Description of the Interview

Considering all the issues discussed above, the current interview is designed to include fifteen questions divide into two main sections. The first three questions are easy personal questions asked for the purpose of gaining factual information about the teaching experience and background .the second section is mainly concerned with knowing inspector's opinions and evaluations about the cultural content within **"Getting Through"**. The final closing question has been carefully designed to permit the interviewee to have the final say.

The investigator designed the interview using two types of questions namely close-ended and open-ended questions. To give more freedom to inspectors so they can answer without feeling the limitations of closed-ended questions, the researcher has used too many open-ended questions for the fact that asking about aspects of teaching experience and knowledge required the use of the abovementioned type.

4.4. Analysis of the Inspectors' Responses

The findings of the interview which aimed at gathering in depth information about the amount of the target cultural aspects in **"Getting Through"** textbook confirmed the results gained from other sources fundamentally, the textbook evaluation checklist.

The interview was conducted with only two inspectors of teaching English as a foreign language in charge of Secondary schools at the level of Wilaya of Oum

El Bouaghi in the east and west districts for each Wilaya has one, two, or a maximum three inspector in the same field.

4.4.1. Results of the Inspectors' Interview

The interview questions have revealed a considerable amount of information that area reviewed as follows:

The first and second item aimed at knowing how many years of teaching and inspecting experience each inspector has. The inspectors' answers indicated that their teaching experience ranges from twenty one to twenty three years. Considering the second item, inspector's responses demonstrated that their experience of inspecting, evaluating, and confirming teachers ranges from one to five years.

Regarding the question investigating whether the inspectors have ever visited any English speaking country .One inspector confesses that he hadn't visit any English speaking country. The other inspector, on the other hand, declared that he visited one of the English speaking countries and had the opportunity to be in real contact with native speakers.

As to the fourth question, both inspectors mentioned that the overall aim of TEFL at secondary schools should be enabling students of a good understanding of the surrounding world and contributing to the openness to others cultures and to interact appropriately and effectively in English with members of its culture.

As far as culture is concerned, the respondents differ in giving their definitions to this term but they agreed on the idea that culture has various aspects. Inspectors gave different components that characterize a particular nation or a group like literature, customs, traditions, religion……..

As to the quality of the target language cultural content embedded in **"Getting Through"** textbook. The informants mentioned that they are satisfied to some extent. In fact, another idea was suggested by another inspector, mainly, he mentioned that **"attention should be paid to the cultural dimension in EFL textbook as we live in a globalized world"**

With regard to the seventh question, both inspectors ensured that all the Algerian textbooks including**" Getting Through"** are accompanied with many official documents mainly the "Teacher's Guide" that provides a sufficient guidance as to how to handle the textbook .However, when talking about how to deal with the cultural component ,again ,both inspectors confess that there exist no directions as to how to teach culture, the activities used, and the techniques that may be utilized to develop such a fifth skill. In fact, one inspector pointed out that the **"cultural content is totally neglected"**. The last inspector, on the other hand, declared that there is a **"lack of a cultural syllabus"**

About the extent to which the content of the textbook serves as a window into learning about the target language culture, the respondents' answers demonstrated that learners can't rely on the **"Getting Through"** only in learning the target language culture. In fact, one informant illustrated by saying that, **"the cultural aspects are tackled in a tourism oriented picture……shows only small parts of what the target culture is ……"**. Accordingly, the other respondent stated that**," It is rather frugal, it doesn't depict in, a panoramic view, the many aspects of the target culture."**

With regard to item nine, both inspectors agree on the idea that the linguistic component is the dominant one in the textbook and it is given precedence over the cultural component. One inspector illustrated by saying that, **"The prevalent view deems the cultural component as secondary in comparison to the linguistic one."**

Another area of concern was the issue of realism and authenticity. The respondents clearly stated that it is recognized that the textbook designers mentioned in **"to the teacher's section''** that the textbook under consideration contains authentic and made up materials. One respondent, however, talked about one issue that is totally neglected and marginalized by textbook designers which is listening scripts and audio CD by which students can practice listening since authenticity necessitates exploring real life language.

As to the course book representation of cultural information, the informants' answers indicated that the cultural aspects are embedded and dealt with in an **'integrative manner'.** one of the inspectors pointed to the fact that**" culturally relevant issues are found in Exploring Matters Further rubric however it is dedicated for further reading and as an additional material related to each unit."**

Concerning their view point vis-à-vis the teacher's manual. The respondents' answers were negative as it witnesses a lack of ways of teaching culture.

Regarding the comparative approach, the informants' answers indicated that there is no systematic contrast or comparison between aspects of learner's culture and the target one. One inspector expressed that "**the comparative framework used in some isolated occurrences on page 27 and page 88."**He further stated that **"there are, also, some cultural insights that were made implicit as to titles given to some units: unit6: No Man is an Island…….that makes reference to……the English poet John Donne…."**

The penultimate question was opened for the inspectors to express their view points on why most EFL teachers do not incorporate culture in their classrooms. Both informants replied by suggesting several reasons that hinder teacher from integrating cultural issues in their classrooms including:

- The politicization issue and top down decisions of the Ministry of Education.
- Lack of cultural syllabus.
- Time constraints.
- Lack of teacher's training.
- The overemphasis on the linguistic component.

As to permit the interviewees to have the final say, the last question was carefully designed to ask for their overall view of the textbook as a whole. General dissatisfaction is felt. One of the inspectors' declared clearly that **"Getting Through textbook is neither an obstacle nor a pillar that may or can enhance the teaching /learning process."**The other responds by saying that" **it should have been a faithful interpretation of the curriculum as it was laid by the Ministry of Education. Some of its parts are congruent with the conceptual framework of teaching English while others (as the cultural component) still need further effort."**

4.4.2. Interpretation of the Results

The results obtained from the inspectors' interview denote that the inspectors have enough teaching experience. This means they are accustomed with the educational reform and with the textbook "Getting Through" itself and hence its positive and negative aspects.

Inspectors' responses to question four demonstrated their familiarity with Competency Based Approach that is currently applied in the Algerian educational system.

As to the fifth item, inspectors' answers reveal the difficulty in giving a standard definition to the concept of culture. What is common among the inspectors' answers is that all of them related culture to aspects like: language, way of speaking, and communication. This reveals that they are aware of the

Interrelationship existing between language and culture, and eventually the role culture plays in foreign language teaching. In fact, this is the aim of this question to see whether teachers consider culture as a part of language or not.

More precisely, the results obtained from questions 6, 7, 8, and 9 demonstrated that the target language cultural content is not adequately treated. It is rather shallow and superficial which clearly confirms the first hypothesis of this research.

Nevertheless, the information the respondents provided for the majority of the questions fit well with the findings obtained from the other data collection instrument. Moreover, the same remarks that were noted during the textbook evaluation checklist were also expressed by the inspector of English language.

4.5. Classroom Observation

Classroom observation is a research technique designed to record teacher's daily practices in the classroom. According to Wallace(1998:100)," observational techniques, used principally for qualitative research ,aim at exploring through observation aspects of what is going on in the classroom for the benefit of teacher's own development. Therefore, the data obtained through observation are said to be eye catching since they provided the researcher with the opportunity to gather "live" information from 'live" situations. (Cohen et al, 2000) .There exist different ways by which researchers can observe the studied setting, among the outstanding types we have "participant" and "non participant" observation.

4.5.1. Aims of Classroom Observation

One of the main goals of classroom observation is to gain a fuller understanding of the particular context in which the phenomenon occurs.

To provide a rich description of the particular setting, we go to the participant' world and attempt to learn from them.

Observation was used as a means to explore, describe, and obtain a fuller picture of the cultural component of the course .accordingly, it aims at investigating the teachers' understanding of culture teaching and the way they actually deal with culture in their classrooms.

4.5.2. Procedure of Classroom Observation

Our procedure of collecting data is as follows. After being granted permission from school heads to carry out investigation, we begin right away our visits to three secondary schools in the Wilaya of Oum El Bouaghi. We were able to attend some of the lessons in the Second Term. After some initial observations, five teachers were selected for the observation. The data were collected on the basis of written field notes as it was not possible with video recording. During lessons observations, we sat in the back of the classroom where we were able to sit without obstructing students.

4.6. Classroom observation's results and discussion

We attempt at describing the results of our observation and discussions in few points arising from the post observation of the teachers concerned. These issues included

- ✓ Overcrowded and noisy classrooms
- ✓ Respect of CBA frameworks in culture teaching
- ✓ Lack of cultural syllabus

4.6.1. Overcrowded and Noisy Classrooms

A general remark concerning the classes we have visited, relates to the fact that almost all the classrooms are more crowded with an average of 40 students per class. An expected result of such a situation is that the overall noise level is

increased and teachers find themselves spending more time managing their classrooms. Another problem identified was that teachers are unable to give attention to students. Teacher's aides are not available and sometimes students have to share textbooks. What is noticeable, also, that sometimes it took the entire class time for students to find seats and chairs, make sure that everybody has a textbook, and then explaining the assignment. Overcrowded and louder classrooms translate to destructions making it more difficult for students to learn and teachers to teach.

4.6.2. Respect of CBA Frameworks in Culture Teaching

The aforementioned atmosphere handicapped the teaching process and not only the teaching of culture. The presentation of culture in the textbook examined is organized under the three sequences procedure, namely Presentation, Practice and Production. This reflects a learner centred approach in which learners take an active part in the learning process .The result of our classroom observation revealed that the 3Ps procedure in relation to the teaching of culture was respected by the teachers we have visited.

As far as culture is concerned, over the observed sessions, and approximately all the teachers were at the level of introducing a unit called "No Man is an Island". The researcher has noticed that nearly all teachers failed to point out to the figurative meaning and the insightful cultural information that denotes this title. An instance of the application of these frameworks in relation to culture teaching was found in p.120 where learners were asked to take a look at the drawings on the left side of the aforementioned pages and provides answers .this activity aims at identifying agencies and organizations that provide help to people. It also aims at developing cultural awareness, tolerance, and empathy through including a crescent used by Muslims and a cross used by other religious groups .

4.6.3. Lack of Cultural Syllabus

In our classroom observations, we noticed that the teaching of culture except for few activities was very limited. Teachers included culture-related activities only at the end of the file in 'Exploring Matters Further' section, and on what they considered important or were prepared to teach. According to one female teacher, the main reasons behind the unsystematic culture – teaching were time constraints, the absence of a cultural syllabus, and the problem of choosing appropriate techniques by teachers. As she argues: cultural knowledge is not tested at the examination, it does not get equal attention. Another problem raised during the classroom observation is that teachers are under constant pressure since they are the limited by the scheduled teaching program. Thus, hardly save time to deal with cultural issues.

The other difficulty why culture was neglected in language classes in the Algerian Second year secondary School could be related to the choice of appropriate techniques as we have said previously. In fact, except for role playing, students' research and the comparison method, the other techniques such as culture capsules, and culture clusters, used to provide cultural knowledge and develop an understanding of the 'other' culture through problem –solving, seemed to be totally ignored by the teachers we have observed. Therefore, in order to improve the situation of culture teaching, more attention in the future should be paid to the training of teachers.

4.7. Interpretation of the findings

The results of the classroom observation revealed that the classroom atmosphere for teaching and learning to take place is not appropriate at all as the majority of classes were overcrowded and noisy. How can we speak of teaching culture and implementing the principles of CBA in such atmosphere, when we have thirty eight or more pupils it displayed also that the cultural activities are not known by the majority of the teachers even though the activities are so simple and well

known. Consequently, this reflects their ignorance to the cultural activities and their reliance on the activities of the textbook which are highly linguistic .Classroom observation also demonstrated that due to the lack of culture teaching methodology, teachers find themselves in a mass. In fact, the high priority that is given to the linguistic aspects and the non inclusion of culture texting in official exams has lead teachers to cast blind eye and deaf ears on the cultural issues. the results obtained have confirmed our second hypothesis in that; despite their awareness about the importance of culture, teachers do not design activities to integrate it in their classroom, furthermore they give to the linguistic aspects precedence over cultural issues.

4.8. Conclusion

The results of the inspectors' interview which was intended to further investigate the cultural content of the textbook under consideration, shows that culture exists to a certain degree in the textbook .however it is not dealt with in a profound way .besides, it demonstrates that culture is of a secondary importance and is left in the background.

The study revealed also that despite the importance of incorporating culture, teachers do not design activities to integrate it in their teaching setting. As a result,some pedagogical recommendations are necessary in order to improve the teaching of culture in Algerian schools in a more effective way.

4.9. Pedagogical Implications and Recommendations

This section bring in some pedagogical implications in the light of the evaluation of the cultural content of the secondary school second year textbook, "Getting Through", and the interpretation of the collected data from the inspectors' interview, and according to our observation of teachers 'perceptions on the basis of the results reached, it appears that culture teaching should be

given more consideration in the future. To this end, these implications are more or less essential for textbook writers and teachers.

4.9.1. Implications for Textbook Designers

The textbook is the foundation stone of the teaching and learning processes and the primary source of knowledge which learners and teachers rely on. Therefore, it should be paid careful attention in terms of supplementing it with variety of speculating cultural content which could attract the pupils to be engaged in learning.

Our evaluation of "Getting Through" elucidates the drawbacks of the cultural content in this textbook that makes it by and large an inefficient manual to teach about the TC. One of the first actions to undertake is a clearer reference to the

cultural component in the textbook's syllabus. Hence, designing a cultural syllabus with clear goals; containing some useful notes and directions on how to teach culture. It is also recommended that syllabus designers and material writers amalgamate all culture areas and make learners practice the cultural information in culture-geared activities (role plays, culture capsules, culture clusters, , and mini-drama). Improving the content of the textbook through the incorporation of up to date and vivid information which deal with various topics like customs, holidays, and daily life, these topics will bring real life and real situations where the users of the foreign language interact. Increasing the number of hours for teaching culture and Inclusion of culture – related issues in the examinations may give weight to teaching culture in Algerian Secondary School English classes. In Algeria, course books are designed by professional material developers under the supervision of the Ministry of Higher Education, and prescribed to all schools of the country. The situation becomes more pressing when teachers are asked to follow a particular textbook which they see as inadequate. It is judicious to

suggest that textbook authors encourage teachers to look beyond what is suggested on the school textbooks and rely on their creativity in exploiting it.

A textbook where the linguistic components (grammar, semantics, and phonology) are given precedence over cultural components and where culture is restricted to accomplish linguistic objectives will not prepare learners to cope with new cultures. Algerian textbook designers are, thus, recommended to review their objectives behind the inclusion of culture in this course book.

4.9.2. Implications for Secondary School Teachers

As discussed in the implications for textbook writers, “Getting Through” is not an effective source to teach about the TC; thus, teachers need to consult other sources like Internet, encyclopedias, books and magazines.

With the wide spread of technology, teachers should use a wide range of teaching aids to foster their teaching of culture. The effective use of technology like videos, internet, and films assure adequate coverage to the cultural knowledge, more importantly, it offers a motivating atmosphere in which the presence of sight and sound will engage the pupils in learning and raise their curiosity to learn.

The ministry of National education should emphasize on teachers development through in training courses, study visits to the English speaking countries to form competent teachers.

The above mentioned recommendations, mainly those connected with teacher training, are of paramount importance because they are part of teacher preparedness to face the challenges imposed by the new reform in education grounded in Competency Based Approach. Thus, in order to be more successful, teachers need regular workshops, seminars and fruitful meetings where the focus

is going to be more on the development of teachers' intercultural skills rather than on academic subjects such as the teaching of grammar.

This study is only a humble attempt to reveal the real value of culture. We hope that the attention to the vital role of culture in communication will be drawn for future design of the textbook. To this end, the study may serve as a springboard for further study in the area.

General Conclusion

The process of teaching a foreign language is such a complex process that incorporates different elements. When designing an EFL course, the textbook designers should care not only for the structural and linguistic aspects of the language, but also should consider the nonlinguistic features of the language. In other words, they should consider the culture of the speakers of that language. For this reason, the current study is carried out to see if this is the situation in the Algerian secondary schools with reference to the second year textbook “Getting Through”, inspectors’ of English language ,and teachers.

The evaluation of “getting Through” and the analysis of the inspectors’ interview revealed that the cultural component is not adequately covered. The syllabus obliges to give much importance to the linguistic aspects at the expense of giving learners insights on the target culture. The inspectors’ interview demonstrated that the target culture is tackled in an tourism oriented picture .the analysis of the textbook’s cultural content along with the results obtained from the interview enabled us to draw conclusions in the direction of our hypothesis. The results obtained from chapter three and four confirm the first hypothesis which underlies the present research in that the treatment of the target culture is shallow and superficial

The classroom observation conducted to figure out how teachers perceive culture in the teaching process, has revealed that little is paid to this important component as a part of language. Besides, the activities designed serve linguistic purposes. All these, provides confirmation in the direction of the second hypothesis.

It is indisputable that culture was and still as an essential part in communication because it shapes the language use. Therefore, teaching language without culture seems to be useless because the unity of the target language and culture give more insights on the interaction with the native speakers. Consequently, there is an urgent need to shed the lights on the situation of culture in Algeria by improving it and encouraging for further studies to come up with effective solutions.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A:

Forward of “Getting Through”

RE:

File Edit View Insert Format Tools Compose Help

From: **The authors of this textbook**
Sent: **April 16, 2006**
To: **The student**
Cc:
Subject: ***Getting Through - SE 2***

Your SE2 English coursebook is called ***GETTING THROUGH***. The way it is presented should be familiar to you, as you have already worked with the first –year book ***AT THE CROSSROADS***, which is very much like this one.

This year too, you will learn how to build projects step by step, using the language and skills that you will acquire in each unit. You will see a short note at the top of each unit telling you what theme you will be engaged with, and how you will possibly organize your work with your classmates to explore this theme, and finally do the relevant project.

You will find here eight units with a specific theme for each. At the end of each unit, you will carry out and present a project. You will do this on your own or with other classmates, as indicated above. But the teacher will always be around to guide you.

Within each unit, there will be a number of exercises for you to do. You will keep them all in a **portfolio.** The portfolio will help you to check your progress as you will be able to go over the same exercises and learn from your mistakes. Indeed, you will make mistakes, and you will correct them. So always keep your draft exercises in your portfolio. The teacher will check your progress and tell you where more work is needed. It is your **overall progress** that matters, not individual tasks and exercises.

In each unit, you will go through five different stages. These are called: **Discovering Language**, **Developing Skills**, **Putting Things Together**, **Where Do We Go From Here?** and **Exploring Matters Further**.

Discovering Language: At this stage, you will learn vocabulary, grammar, spelling, pronunciation, idioms (working with new words and expressions). The phonetic transcription of words and the pictures will help you to understand and use the language.

Developing Skills: Here, you will develop your listening and speaking abilities; you will get to communicate correctly and fluently in English. You will also learn to read and understand short and long texts (newspaper articles, poems ...) and to write reports, letters, stories, etc.

Putting Things Together: This is where your learning is made 'visible'. You will be asked to use all the skills you have acquired in context by doing a project; it can be a report or a summary related to the theme dealt with in each unit. You can do it alone or with one or more classmates. The important thing is to write a first draft, then hand it to your teacher, who will provide her/his advice. After revising it (again with classmates), you will be requested to present it to the class.

Where Do We Go From Here? This part will help you to check what you have learnt by filling in the grid appended to each unit and by following your teacher's instructions.

Exploring Matters Further: Here, you will find additional, authentic material we have provided you with: short passages taken from books, magazines, newspapers, the Internet and other sources. These will give you the opportunity to further consolidate your grammar structures, to learn more vocabulary and discover various kinds of texts, for instance,how newspaper articles, letters, poems, advertisements ... are written.

We hope that you will like the layout and the themes of this textbook, and that you will take pleasure in learning English through the various activities we have devised for you. You are now at a transitional stage of your studies before their completion next year. It is important that you make the most out of the activities and tasks presented to you in this book. These will consolidate your knowledge and your learning strategies, and prepare you for next year's final English course.

RE:

File Edit View Insert Format Tools Compose Help

From: **The authors of this textbook**
Sent: **April 16, 2006**
To: **The teacher**
Cc:
Subject: ***Getting Through - SE 2***

GETTING THROUGH is an English coursebook for students in their second year of Secondary Education. It complies with the curriculum designed and issued by the Ministry of National Education in December 2005. It also keeps the procedures used in the first-year coursebook, ***AT THE CROSSROADS***, relying as it does on the competency-based approach, which is both learner-centred and project-oriented.

The textbook offers activities likely to stimulate and develop individual competencies. Our goals are to make students consolidate their knowledge of functional English, in terms of vocabulary, grammar and pronunciation. You will find here various activities aiming to develop the four language skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing) as well as other activities whose purpose is to help your learners improve on methodological skills (how to collect and process data, how to work with peers, how to design a project and present it to the class).

Your students will be asked to keep a portfolio of all the tasks and exercises they will do in class or at home. This portfolio is a useful means of monitoring the progress made by each student. More importantly, it helps learners to return to previous exercises so as to understand and correct the mistakes made in them. So words deleted and replaced with correct ones should be a practice encouraged by all teachers.

You will note that the texts in the book are selected in relation to the themes dealt with in each unit. We think they are in sufficient number in each unit to cater for differing abilities, needs and class interests. Some of them are made up, while others are authentic, i.e., excerpts from magazine and newspaper articles. So it's up to you to select those you deem most suitable for your class.

The eight units contained in the textbook are meant to be completed in a maximum of 15 hours each. Every unit comprises five main parts, which are entitled and described as follows:

Discovering Language: The students will discover the vocabulary, spelling, pronunciation and grammar as constitutents of the language to be dealt with in each unit.

Developing Skills: Here the students will build basic language skills as well as intellectual skills (thinking, guessing, anticipating, making hypotheses, analysing, synthesizing, planning, monitoring progress, etc.). These skills are required for initiating work on projects and class presentations based on these projects. This enterprise naturally integrates the three competencies described in the syllabus, i.e., interacting orally, interpreting messages and producing messages.

If the first two parts above are the core of the teaching/learning process the three parts that follow are no less significant, as they constitute in fact its touchstones.

Putting Things Together: Here we come to the project itself as an outcome of the constituents of language and of the skills acquired in each unit. The students will find guidance on how to get the project materialized. They will have the opportunity to combine primary and social skills and thus display their individual achievements.

Where Do We Go From Here? This part deals with students' self-assessment, i.e., checking their own progress through various means, including filling grids and keeping portfolios. You will use some of the texts included in the **Exploring Matters Further** section and the projects to assess the language skills and functions taught in each unit.

Exploring Matters Further: In this last part of the unit, students will get an opportunity to learn more about the topic dealt with through extensive reading. They will acquire more vocabulary and improve their knowledge of grammar. They will also be made aware of spoken and written language registers.

We hope that this textbook will be a valuable aid for teachers *cum*-facilitators guiding their learners in lively and attractive projects. Our ambition has been to design a pleasant and 'flexible' resource book from which teachers will pick up or leave aside activities depending on their teaching schemes and on their students' capabilities. We thus hope to promote a spirit of personal initiative and autonomy in both learners and teachers.

Keep us posted at

boutriche@yahoo.fr.

Appendix ‘B’:

Textbook Evaluation Checklist’s Result

Textbook Evaluation Checklist		Excellent	Good	Adequate	Poor	Totally Lacking
2	**Content**					
2.1	**General Analysis of the Textbook Content**					
2.1.1	On which basis are the textbook units organized (functions, structures, topics)?	✓				
2.1.2	Is the information on the target culture integrated in the course or added at the end of every unit or even presented in a separate unit at the end of the course book?				√	
2.1.3	Does the course book deal with big “C” culture, small “c” culture or culture general issues?			√		

2.1.4	Is it suitable to the learners' age, level, cultural background and interests?		√			
2.2	**Micro- Social Level**					
2.2.1	Are the characters in the book representative of the foreign society with regard to their age, social class, interests, mentality, family situations, etc?				√	
2.2.2	Does the textbook introduce the pupils to famous TC figures?				√	
2.2.3	Are the characters of the book credible?			✓		
2.3	**Macro-Social Level**					
2.3.1	Is the cultural content given a historical dimension?				√	
2.3.2	Does the textbook provide adequate knowledge of the geography of the country in question?					√

2.3.3	Is there information on socio-political and socio-economic problems such as unemployment, immigration, crime…?				√	
2.4	**Intercultural analysis**					
2.4.1	Does the textbook activate learner's knowledge of the target language culture? Is the cultural information portrayed in comparative framework?				√	
2.4.2	Do the textbook provide authentic, richer, and more varied language input?				√	
2.4.3	Do cultural incidents occur? Is there reference to situations where a person with good mastery of English is not understood because of cultural difference?					√
2.4.4	Is there a reference to several TL-speaking cultures?	√				
2.5	**Analysis of the Standpoint of the Author**					
2.5.1	Is the cultural content accompanied with evaluative comments, either explicitly or implicitly?					√
2.5.2	Are the teachers and learners encouraged to consult additional materials on the topics dealt with?					√
3	**Techniques of Presentation and Practice**					

3.1	Is culture integrated in texts, tasks and dialogues?		√			
3.2	What are the techniques used for presenting the cultural content? (Role-Play, minidrama				√	
3.3	Are there any photographs of people, places? (Black and white or colored? Up-to date or not?) Are there any drawings, cartoons, maps, diagrams?			√		

APPENDIX ‘C’

Inspectors’ Interview

Inspector's Interview

Dear inspector,

The present interview seeks to collect some information about the importance of integrating culture within the English syllabus. It is, also, an attempt to measure the amount of the cultural component as incorporated in the Algerian second year secondary school textbook of English **"Getting Through".** Thus, you are kindly invited to answer the following questions sincerely for they are significant for the success of this work.

****

1. For how long have you been teaching English?
2. For how long have you been practicing inspection of English?
3. Have you ever visited England, America or other English speaking country?
4. What do you think should be the overall aim of TEFL at secondary schools?
5. How would you define culture?
6. How do you feel about the quality of the cultural content in the EFL textbook "Getting Through"?
7. Does the book give any information, instructions or suggestions about how the book may be used and how the cultural content may be handled?
8. To what extent does the content of the textbook serve as a window into learning about the target language culture (patterns of daily life, customs, geography, literature…….)?
9. Do you think that the cultural component is considered on equal footing with the other language components? Why?
10. As EFL textbooks are the key vehicle in the teaching/learning process. Do you think that the book provides an authentic and a richer language input?
11. Is the information on the foreign culture integrated in the course or is it added at the end of every unit or even presented in a separate unit at the end of the course book?
12. Does the teacher's manual provide further information about the target culture and guidance as to how to present it to students?

13. Does the book show parallels and contrasts between learner's culture(s) and others? Are differences made explicit in the textbook?
14. Most EFL teachers do not incorporate the cultural dimension in their classrooms, in your opinion what might be the reasons?
15. If you are asked to give us your overall view about the textbook "Getting Through", what would you say?

Thank you for your precious collaboration!

Appendix ‘D’:

Inspectors’ Answers to the Interview

INSPECTOR ONE

1. 23 years.

2. One year.

3. No.

4. TEFL in secondary schools aims at enabling a good understanding of the surrounding world and contributing to the openness to the universal civilization by enabling the learners to be active participants not mere consumers (Law of Orientation: 08/04). It goes for, without saying that it also aims at consolidating and deepening the so far and forth acquired knowledge in the previous year(s).

5. Pervasive aspects of life that have to do with lifestyle, language, religion, customs and traditions.

6. Quite satisfactory in general.

7. The book (Getting Through) is accompanied with a "teacher's Guide" that provides sufficient information and directives on how the book should be used in a prescriptive way though it is felt that the procedural knowledge how to use the cultural component is totally neglected.

8. It is rather frugal. It does not depict in, a panoramic view, the many aspects of the target language.

9. No. The prevalent view deems the cultural component as secondary in comparison to the linguistic one.

10. As recognized by the authors of the textbook (P. VI), the book makes use of both authentic and non-authentic materials.

11. Information on foreign culture is dealt with in an integrative way along the unit though additional material is supplied at the end of each unit (Exploring Matters Further)

12. Absolutely no!

13. There is no systematic contrast or comparison of the aspects of the learners' culture and the target one except some isolated occurrences on page 27 and page 88 (Tip Box). There are, also, some cultural insights that were made implicit as

to titles given to some units: **Unit 6: "No Man is an Island**" that makes reference to the English poet and religious man from the Elizabethan era, John Donne.

14. Greater importance is given to the linguistic components; there is a lack of awareness on the part of the teacher of the crucial role the cultural content plays in shaping pupils' minds.

15. "Getting Through" is a book that comes in a series of interrelated books. Therefore, it should have been a faithful interpretation of the curriculum as it was laid by the Ministry of Education. Some of its parts are congruent with the conceptual framework of teaching English while others (as the cultural component) still need further effort.

INSPECTOR TWO

1. 21 years
2. 5 years
3. Yes, in three occasions ,I have visited England three times and I had the opportunity to be in real contact with native speakers
4. Well ,I do believe that the overall aim of TEFL at secondary schools is to enable students to interact effectively and appropriately in English with members of its culture
5. It means everything that have relationship with habits of people, way of thinking, their knowledge, superstition history ,and traditions
6. I am really satisfied with getting through textbook. However, I would like to say that many cultural texts and means of illustrations are needed because the cultural dimension in the textbook is considered supplementary and non compulsory component(incidental in texts and tasks)
7. Despite the fact that the teacher's guide and the other accompanied documents give a road map in the process of teaching and learning ,no guidance is found concerning culture teaching methodology.
8. Very little. The target language cultural aspects are tackled in a tourism oriented picture i.e. ;shows only small parts of what the target culture is.the topics included are general ,they are concerned with all humanity and are not specified to any particular
9. It is apparent in getting through textbook that the linguistic components (grammar, vocabulary, phonology …)are given precedence over cultural components. This latter, is restricted to accomplish linguistic objectives and not prepare learners to cope with new cultures.
10. It is clearly stated in " To the Teachers' Section" that the book consists of authentic and made up materials. One aspect which is prevalent in all textbooks and not only to the textbook at hand is the total lack of Audio-visual materials in that listening scripts are deprived from its real context.
11. As the Algerian textbooks are designed with reference to the CBA frameworks, the foreign cultural content is tackled in an integrative and embedded manner .however culturally relevant aspects are left in the background i,e; if we take'Exploring Matters Further "rubric many texts

literary works, songs and the like are dedicated for further reading only this means are not a part of the syllabus to be taught.

12. The comparative approach is present in unit one and unit four respectively (life styles and the ABC dreams)where students are asked to compare and contrast their native culture with the target one. This approach is efficient in that is raise cultural awareness and empathy .However, the differences are dealt with in an implicit manner

13. No, the teacher's manual witnesses a total negligence of information as to how to teach culture to students, a shortage concerning the techniques and the activities through which a teacher can cope with the cultural dimension in the educational setting.

14. Authoritative decisions, the politicization issue, time constraints and ther, lack of teacher's training .all these facts hinder teachers from incorporating culture in their classrooms.

15. All in all, I do believe that getting through can not be considered as a rich source of culture neither our home nor the host one. The already mentioned textbook is neither an obstacle nor a pillar that may or can enhance the learning process .in fact t, consideration should be given to the kernel parts that may lead in the future to a better language teaching and learning

APPENDIX ‘E’

Culturally Related tasks

READING AND WRITING

1 Look at the picture and discuss the following questions.

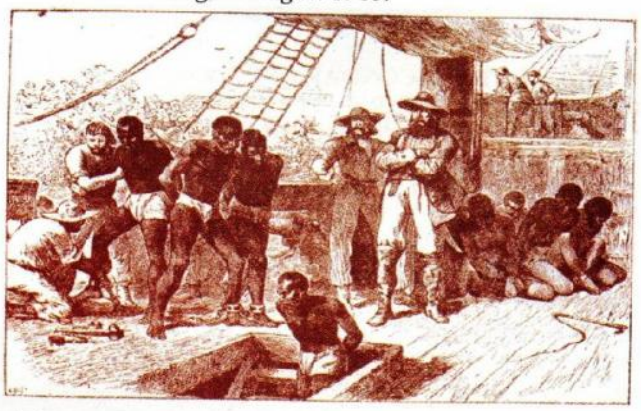
A. What does the picture represent?

B. Where do you think the boat is and where is it going?

C. These dates and personalities are important in American history. Why?

Abraham Lincoln: 1861- 1865.

Martin Luther King Jr: August 1963.



2 Read the newspaper article below and answer the following questions.

A. Who was Martin Luther King?

B. What were his hopes and wishes ? Start your answer like this:

He hoped/wished/expected his children to _____.

C. Martin Luther King's address in the article was written in an oratorical style. What are the characteristics of this style, and why did he use it? Discuss.

D. Did you like reading the part of Martin Luther King's address reproduced in the article. Why?

Martin Luther King, The Man of Peace

Black Americans can do a lot of things that their parents could not do years ago because of racism. They can vote; they can eat in any restaurant they like; and their children can go to the same schools as white children. As we prepare ourselves to celebrate Martin Luther King Day next Monday, we'll reproduce a part of King's address ***I Have a Dream*** *in memory of this great leader who was able to combat racism and hatred with non-violence and love.*

THE A B C OF DREAMS (Literary Streams only)

Make a search into how people of your locality interpret their dreams and write an *A B C of Dreams* in the form of a poster with illustrations.

You can use the sample of the *A B C of Dreams* below written by a an English high school student as a model.

For thousands of years people have believed that dreams can tell us what will happen in the future. They were seen as **'divine messages'**. Some people still believe that dreams foretell the future. Here are some of the most common dreams and their meanings.

Animals: **If** you dream of a pet, you **will** be happy . But wild animals, like lions and tigers mean you **will** have many enemies.

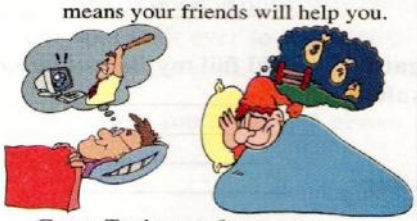
Ball: **If** you are playing with a ball in your sleep, you **will** receive some very good news.

Coffee: Drinking coffee shows that you **will** soon move house.

Drums: **If** you hear drums, you **will** quarrel with your family. If you see them, the quarrel will end.

Eating: This is an unlucky dream. It often means the end of a marriage or relationship.

Fish: One fish means you will get money. More than one fish means your friends will help you.



Grass: To dream of grass means that something wrong **will** happen to you **if** you don't leave the countryside. You must live in the city.

Hungry: Don't worry **if** you dream of being hungry. You will never be hungry in your life.